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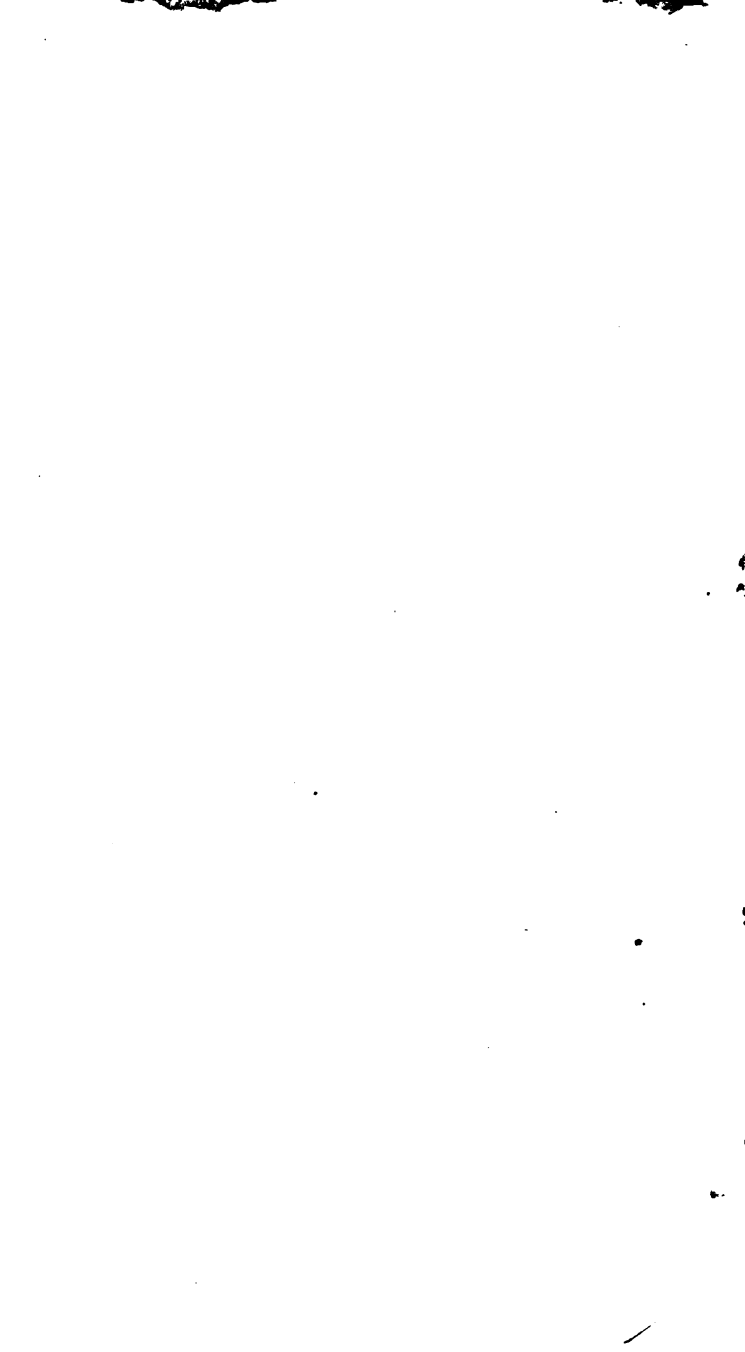
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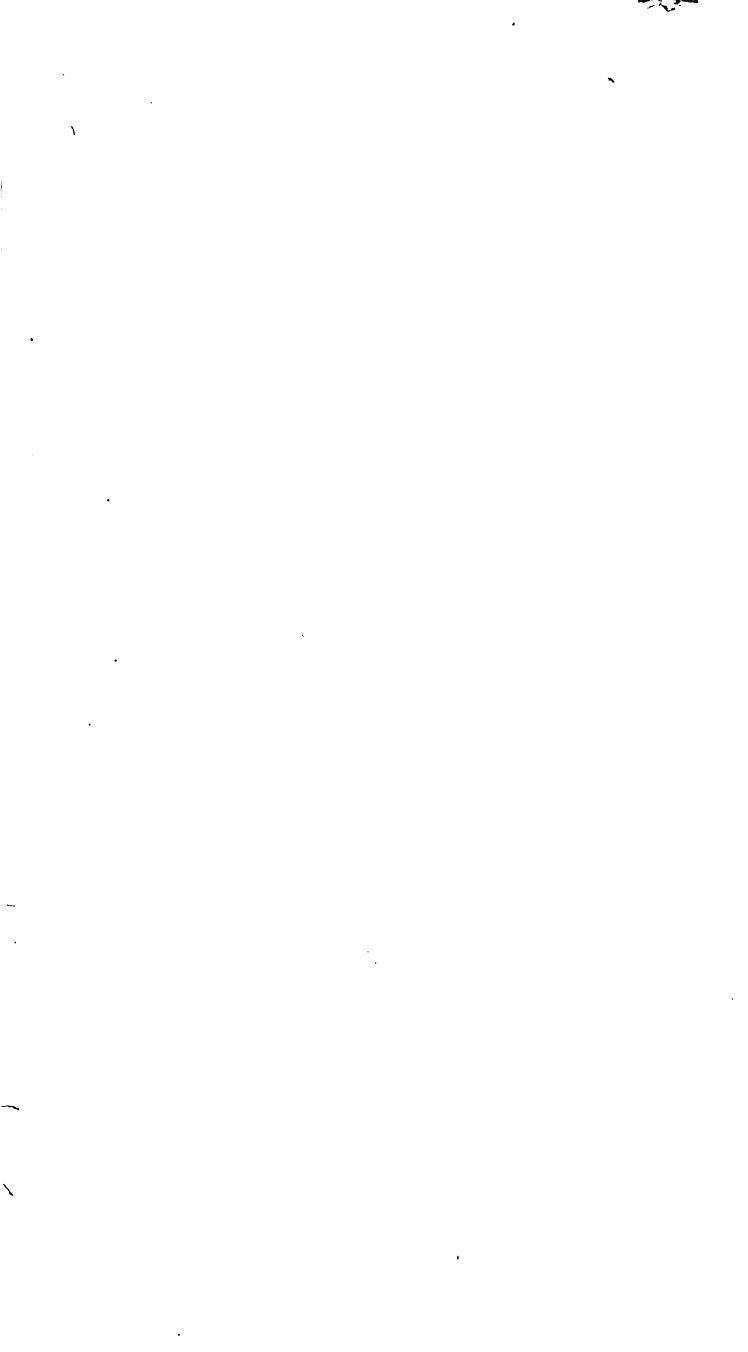


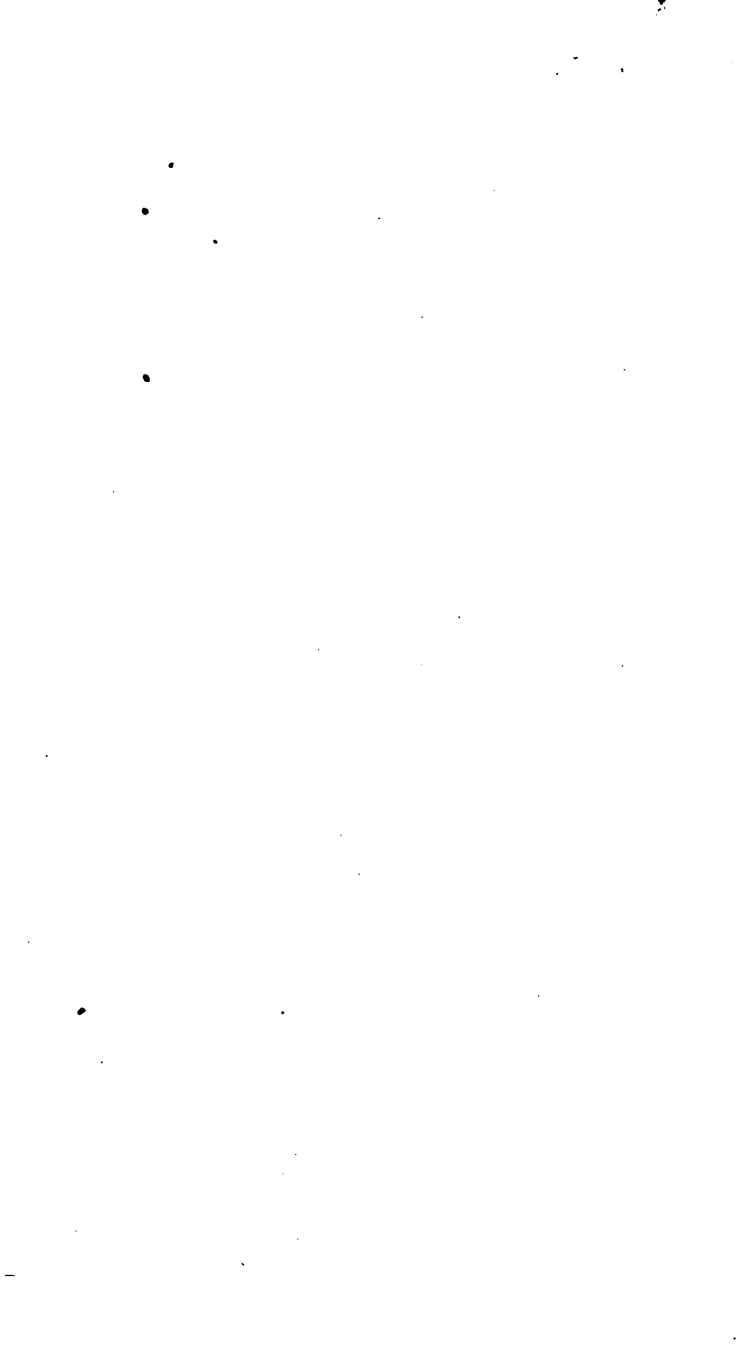
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16





SIXTY YEARS OF THE LIFE

OF

JEREMY LEVIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By *Longman & Co.*

——πολλὰ μὲν γέλοια μ' ἐ-
πῆν, πολλὰ δὲ σπουδαῖα——

ARISTOPH.—*Reus.*

VOL. I.

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THE WEB OF OUR LIFE IS OF A MINGLED YARN, GOOD AND
ILL TOGETHER ; OUR VIRTUES WOULD BE PROUD, IF OUR
FAULTS WHIPPED THEM NOT ; AND OUR CRIMES WOULD DE-
SPAIR, IF THEY WERE NOT CHERISHED BY OUR VIRTUES.

All's Well that Ends Well.



CONTENTS OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Prefatory Letter	PAGE ix
----------------------------	------------

BOOK FIRST.

CHAP. I. Jeremy enters the world with the proper escort of phenomena,	13
CHAP. II. The importance of a name fully proved, in the very teeth of Shakspeare and Juliet, . .	17
CHAP. III. The mystery of rearing children laid open to the profane eyes of the uninitiated, . . .	30
CHAP. IV. Jeremy enters school—and departs therefrom with undue celerity, first giving a striking example of honesty by paying off all debts of his contracting,	37

BOOK SECOND.

CHAP. I. An experiment in Hydrostaticks, . . .	45
CHAP. II. A much-ado-about-nothing,—with a disquisition on horseflesh,	47
CHAP. III. Portrait of Jeremy,	50
CHAP. IV. Jeremy becomes a man—gets into hot water—is scalded—and, in order to avoid such accidents for the future, determines on a bold step,	51
CHAP. V. Filial piety. The Blessings of Friendship.—Jeremy leaves his father's house—and is knocked down, and robbed by his companion.—A friend in need,	61

CHAP. VI. A lesson for Benevolence.—Jeremy proves a scoundrel to his benefactor—and is treated accordingly,	65
CHAP. VII. The Goose Tavern.—How to fill one's belly and call upon the mouth to discharge the reckoning. An amour of an exalted character is nipped in the bud by the discovery of double-dealing on the part of the lady. Arrival of a stranger,	69
CHAP. VIII. A "Dramatic Sketch."—Jeremy finds a patron in the stranger—but has his prospects blighted by a horrid murder. He makes a narrow escape with his own life,	79
CHAP. IX. The newspaper editor. Justice Even. The murderers taken, and the body of the murdered discovered. Jeremy arrives at his uncle's door,	96
CHAP. X. My uncle and my aunt. The reader is made thoroughly acquainted with them,	110
CHAP. XI. A night of sober reflection,	119
CHAP. XII. Jeremy becomes a favourite with his uncle. The dinner party.—Mr. Fox, Mrs. Fox, and the two Misses Fox—Mrs. Bulleye and little Bulleye—Gentility of the order of Fungi. An indulgent temper in parents no proof of a kind heart,	122
CHAP. XIII. A letter from my mother. Female eloquence,	142
CHAP. XIV. Another uncle. Jeremy becomes a student of medicine,	149
CHAP. XV. A discovery of a delicate nature. "'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good."	156
CHAP. XVI. Full portrait of my uncle Timothy Lewis. His young friend, George Catling. Scene between the two. Singular conclusion—prospect of a love intrigue,	163
CHAP. XVII. History of my uncle Timothy and the beautiful Catharine Aston,	176

CHAP. XVIII. The "Prospect" widens. Jeremy fancies himself in love, and by a necessary consequence grows poetical. The reader is treated with a splendid effusion, worthy of inscription on the sybilline leaves of the New-Monthly. Jeremy Levis the Father of Impassioned Poetry !—Literary Gazette. Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews. Prophecy of famine in the world of letters. A review as it should be. A dream, . . .	211
CHAP. XIX. The two rings and the two jewellers, . . .	225
CHAP. XX. Jeremy grows sick of physic, . . .	230
CHAP. XXI. Our hero tired of his uncle Jeremy—quarrels with him—and leaves his protection—thereby affording his aunt an opportunity of making a second display of eloquence, . . .	234
CHAP. XXII. (In the popular style of "THE DISOWNED"—) An elopement, . . .	240
CHAP. XXIII. Jeremy is cured of his passion—after paying for it—as we do for all diseases, . . .	247
CHAP. XXIV. At the Bull tavern.—Jeremy is detained by a storm. The Reverend Malachi Snubbs, and a mysterious lady ; Sir James Maitland, Lieutenant Rattle, and Sergeant Splint ; Mr. Spits, and Mrs. Spits. Story of "The Bridal Night." New light in the kitchen. Tom Drammer. My host's Tale. A frolic. Scene in Mrs. Spits' chamber, . . .	253
CHAP. XXV. Jeremy, leaving the Bull tavern, meets with an adventure on the road, which once more brings him into company with Sir James Maitland and the fair Methodist, and seems to be the opening of a brighter day in his fortunes, . . .	335
CHAP. XXVI. The mystery of Mrs. Snubbs explained. Jeremy finds himself in better society than he has hitherto been accustomed to frequent. Spirit of independence, . . .	349
CHAP. XXVII. Jeremy becomes virtuous—finds a new attraction at the house of his new friend Lady Arne. A popular preacher, . . .	365

CHAP. XXVIII. The Serenade,	376
CHAP. XXIX. The Declaration. A slip between the cup and the lip,	379
CHAP. XXX. The accident, that removes Jeremy from the circle in which he was making himself so happy, brings him once more into union with his earliest, truest, yet least known friend, . . .	385
CHAP. XXXI. A brief sketch of the character, etc. of Edward Clayton,	388
CHAP. XXXII. The execution,	395
CHAP. XXXIII. Jeremy learns the death of his kind old uncle and his aunt. A still deeper ca- lamity befalls him,	399

JEREMY LEVIS

TO THE

READER.

INDULGENT READER:—

BEFORE thou beginnest the history of a life which God hath seen fit to visit with much vicissitude, I would have thee lend thy most diligent attention to the following simple caution.—

Bear then well in mind, through the whole course of this work, that thou art not reading a book of adventures, contrived merely for thy amusement and the author's profit—but the life of a being, neither above nor below the common line of mortality, whose misfortunes, brought upon him chiefly by his own folly, may prove to thee an instructive, while not uninteresting lesson. And be not offended that his most serious moods are often traversed by a strange vein of levity; for such, dear Reader, is the faithful transcript of his feelings. It would seem that some men come into this world merely to weep, and others—merely to laugh.

The same waves, that sink the former, but wash the latter with their spray.—Of these latter am I: judge then accordingly—

—————Liberius si
Dixero quid, si forte jocosius; hoc mihi juris
Cum venia dabis—————.

A word more.—Thou rememberest, doubtless, the preliminary story which Gil Blas tells his reader of the two scholars and the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias:—thou wilt apply his conclusion to the work before thee—

Qui que tu sois, ami lecteur, tu vas ressembler à l'un ou à l'autre de ces deux écoliers. Si tu lis mes aventures sans prendre garde aux instructions morales qu'elles renferment, tu ne retireras aucun fruit de cet ouvrage; mais si tu le lis avec attention, tu y trouveras, suivant le précepte d'Horace, l'utile mêlé avec l'agréable.

Of what complexion soever thou mayest be, friendly reader, thou wilt certainly resemble one of those two scholars: for, if thou perusest my adventures, without perceiving the moral instructions they contain, thou wilt reap no harvest from thy labour; but, if thou readest with attention, thou wilt find in them, according to the precept of Horace, profit mingled with pleasure.—*Smollet's Translation.*

BOOK FIRST.



SIXTY YEARS OF THE LIFE

OF

JEREMY LEVIS.

BOOK FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

Juno Lucina, fer opem! serva me, obsecro!

THE.—And.

DEAR READER—If you have ever read at all, you must have read of certain countries, where, whensoever an addition is about to be made, in the natural way, to the number of the inhabitants, every circumstance attending the entrance of the new comer is observed and remembered as an omen of his future good or bad fortune. Now, with your free leave, it is a most excellent custom, and one which I shall strictly observe in recording the birth of the proper subject of these memoirs — that is to say, of my own proper, masculine self.

Be pleased then to sketch, upon the tablet of your fancy, as vile a little village, and in as vile a site, as your pure imagination will permit. Well—follow my finger whilst I indicate certain spots therein worthy of your

attention. Here, on the right—next neighbour to that spireless church—you have a long, low house. You see it displays some little regard to cleanliness. It is indeed no other than the parsonage. Now look at that one-eyed dwelling, at the end of the street—directly facing you—there. What says its sign?

MEG . n ANDY . daRY .
wOMan . and . mIDwIRn .

n.B . GooD . attENshun . to . KowS . and .
laDEEs .

That speaks for itself. Now put by the picture, and I will commence my history.

One morning, in the month of January, and year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight, a young woman was seen standing beneath Meg's comfortable sign. I say *seen*, inasmuch as the noise she made, by using her fist as a drumstick on Mrs. Handy's door, had drawn to the neighbouring windows many a curious face—though the day had scarcely broke. The truth is, our village, like all other villages, was famous for the number of its newspapers. I do not mean those dirty, black and white articles, which we cannot open without first opening our pockets; but those respectable, elderly ladies, whose business it is to gather, polish, and arrange all the news of the day, and, when thus prepared, to retail it for the mere asking. In sooth, they are a generous race, and have their enemies; but they who love the "dissemination of knowledge" love the gossips, and—so do I.

No wonder then, that the noise made by Meg's customer should produce such a sensation among Meg's neighbours. As soon as the former's fist commenced knocking, a dozen noses simultaneously ceased snoring—off jumped a dozen coverlets—down on their respective supporters leaped a dozen bodies—up flew a dozen windows—and, ere a second had elapsed, out popped a dozen night-capped heads.

"Who is it, young woman? who is it?" screamed out a dozen voices.

"None of your business!" was the ready answer. "You'd best keep your tongues in doors, neighbors!—Meg! Meg Handy! why Meg, I say! get up, you old _____"

The last word of this gentle exhortation was either clipped off by the frost, or swallowed through dread of it; for not one of the twenty-four ears could catch it. Presently Meg's solitary window opened, and out peeped a flannel night-cap of uncertain color, beneath whose greasy folds a pair of rheumy eyes might be seen, opening and shutting their rugose lids with the most bewitching modesty; whilst between them a barometer, in the form of a nose of portentous magnitude, thrust forth its purple sign of cold weather. A wrinkled mouth followed this latter, within whose ample folds grinned two or three fangs, that no one, however envious, would have taken for artificial.

"Who's there?" began Meg's throat *forte*. "O! it's you, is it, Betty? The parson's lady is ——— heh? oh, I understand, I understand!—Yes, yès, I'm coming, Betty! wait a moment, my dear!" concluded Mrs. Handy's voice *piano*.

What a happy thing it is, that we are beings so susceptible! Do you not think so, Reader?—You seem to hesitate, as though you do not altogether comprehend me. Well, I will explain. Suppose that Mistress Meg Handy, Dairy Woman, etc., had been less susceptible: suppose, I say, that being, as was natural, somewhat irritated at the necessity of quitting her warm bed on a cold winter's morning, the sight of a customer had been unable to warm her—that is, to soothe her irritated feeling—what would have been the consequence? Would not the gentle Betty have forgot her nature and waxed wroth? and would not Meg have been injured thereby?

You nod assent. Well then, is it not a happy thing that we are beings so susceptible?

——I don't know that, Mr. Author; we are not all dairy-women, nor midwives.——

Very true, Mr. Reader; but we are all Mrs. Handies, however. Why, I remember that when I was a school-boy, I made it a regular rule never to learn my lessons on quarter-day,—and why, forsooth? Because, just as the master was meditating an assault upon my breeches' buttons, I would meekly present the amount of his bill, and in an instant would he “unknit his threatening brows,” and smile as sweetly as a May morning after clouds. Now, all this is a proof of the amiability of human nature. Reader! are you satisfied?

After the lapse of a few minutes, the honorable Mrs. Handy, Dairy-woman and Midwife, was seen accompanying the honoured Miss Betty, Chamber-maid and Errand-girl, with the most condescending and envied familiarity.

This was all the dozen heads had waited for. Down went the dozen windows; and in less than half an hour afterwards, the whole village was talking of babies. Oh, those gossips are useful creatures!

The affectionate pair found the family of the Reverend Mr. Levis in the greatest excitement. Some of its members were seen running up and down stairs on tiptoe, with their fore-finger on their close-drawn lips, as though they themselves were about to be delivered—of some mighty secret. These were all females. Others were sitting in silent agitation, with their eyes and ears wide open,—looking occasionally at one another, as though each suspected her neighbour might know more of the matter than herself. These too were all females.—While the only male in the house, the Reverend parson himself, was measuring, with rapid yet noiseless steps, the length and

breadth of his library, and every now and then bending his ashy face near the door of the adjoining apartment, where lay the subject of so much anxiety, the vessel freighted with all his hopes. Whether curiosity had any thing to do with this behaviour I know not; but, ever since the time of Eve ——— Does not Demosthenes tell us that delivery is every thing?

* * * * *

Two hours afterwards, thanks to pilot Meg, that vessel came to a safe haven; and its living cargo was consigned, to the arms of the delighted owner.*

CHAPTER II.

What's in a name?——

Romeo and Juliet.

AFTER they had got me, one of the first things my parents thought necessary——

But, whilst I yet may, it will be well to give the portraits of my parents:—

My father was a tall, thin, cadaverous looking man, with nothing very prepossessing in his physiognomy. A little head, stuck upon an unconscionably long neck, and almost hidden by a preposterously large wig, was the first thing that met the eye, in as much as said head had a sin-

* The incidents which have been recorded in this first chapter did not fall under my own observation, as the sagacious reader may suppose; but were related to me by Betty Chambermaid, when I had attained a reasonable age. In like manner, most of the matter of the two succeeding chapters came from the lips of my prudent mother—as I think it best to mention, lest the charitable reader should suspect me of breaking the ninth commandment.

gular fancy for getting before the rest of the body, when the latter was in motion,—as though afraid that the feet, which members it justly considered the lowest in rank, would reach the journey's end before itself—the highest, and, according to its own ideas, the noblest part of the whole man. I was, therefore, often inclined to doubt what the master taught me of the line of gravitation. A pair of immense shaggy eyebrows served as ledges to two deep-sunk caves, wherein shone the smallest but most brilliant eyes I think I have ever beheld;—contrasted with his sallow, sunken cheeks, they had certainly a most singular effect; I never knew whether to laugh or cry, when I looked upon them. Between these *islets* and his continent mouth an immense nose served as bridge; but a bridge so narrow, that the very flies seemed afraid to try its passage. Indeed, it was the wonder of his parishioners that the bone had never cut the skin through,—it was always threatening such a catastrophe. But the mouth!—It seemed ever open, like its owner's family bible; and when he spoke, it reminded you of a yawning sepulchre,—to which resemblance, no doubt, the Rev. Mr. Levis owed his celebrity for preaching the most impressive funeral sermon in the kingdom. The shaft which had the honour of supporting this wonderful capital was flat, slender, and crooked.—His legs were long, bent, and spindle. Now, if you clap these latter directly into the centre of two broad feet—each two feet in length—you will have my father's self before you.* I hope, sweet Reader, you do not suspect me of fooling you with a caricature—I would scorn to do it. Nay—ugly as you may think my respected sire, he was considered to be the best looking (with one exception) of seven sons.

My mother's portrait is the very reverse of this.—There was nothing remarkable in her appearance. She

* This sketch represents my father as he was when I had years upon me—some eight or ten; and, upon my honour, I do not believe he was uglier when he begat me.

was a pretty, little, round-bodied woman, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer; and had married my father for the sake of his station, as he had her for love.

By the by—what a prepossession all women have for a clergyman! Be he as ugly as the devil, they never find it out—till he is married;—the gown covers all *his* faults, as it does *their* legs. For my part, I have never been able to discover the reason of it, by dint of my own discerning faculties; and as to any assistance from the women themselves—God bless them! though they cannot keep another's secrets, they always take the best care of their own. However, I can make some shrewd guesses—as for example :—

It is either :—because a clergyman is always respected, as long as he respects himself.—The sex loves rank.

Or :—because so good a man must necessarily make a good and *easy* husband.—The sex loves sway.

Or :—because, however much they may love sinning themselves, women have no notion of their husband's being naughty.—The sex is naturally of a jealous temper.

Or :—because women, being naturally inclined to evil, think to palliate their own sin beneath their husbands' cassock.—The sex hath always an eye to its own interests.

Or :—because—Draw nearer to me, docile Reader; I would whisper in your ear. Now, between ourselves, I do not believe a word of what I have been saying. The true reason is :—that woman, having inherited from the great first sample of her sex a certain amiable *weather-cockishness* of disposition, peculiarly susceptible to the wind of eloquence, is more readily swayed to good than stiff *unpivoted* man. Of which mobility of character, I will give an illustration before we part.*

Be that as it may, the characters of my parents differed as much as their persons,—there being but one

* Vid. Book II. Chap. XXVI.

point of resemblance between them—viz. a remarkable sweetness of temper. In other respects my father bore no more resemblance to my mother, than does a poodle-dog to a tabby-cat.

He was a man of education ; she was a woman of no education whatever—except the little she had received from him. He read no novels ; she read nothing else. He adored the ancients—because they were the only authors of whom he knew any thing ; she despised them—because they were the very authors of whom she knew nothing.

He was taciturn—except when a favourite opinion was attacked ; she was loquacious—on all occasions. He was frugal ; she was wasteful. He disliked company ; she loved it to excess.

He was neat in person ; she was sluttish.

He rose early, and retired late ; she rose late, and retired early. He sat ten minutes at meals ; she two hours. He ate no fish ; she ate fish of all kinds.

But, to balance these differences, besides the point of resemblance above mentioned :—He loved *her* for her real beauty ; she respected *him* for his supposed talents.

Though the reader may think the foregoing list in some respects trifling, I, as a friend, advise him to commit it to memory. Otherwise, he may be puzzled in some parts of this history.

After they had got me, one of the first things my parents thought necessary was a name,—and they were right.

One evening, then, that the worthy couple were left to themselves—the nurse (who was no other than our respectable friend, Mrs. Handy.—Kind-hearted creature ! she made it her chief boast “ that *she* never brought folks into the world, like her betters, to let them slip out of it again as soon as they had taken a liking to it—not *she* ! ”)—the nurse, I say, having gone out to lock her “ kows ” up

for the night—my father, who had been studying Lavater in the coals, discontinued his philosophic task with a sigh, drew his chair nearer to my mother, looked tenderly on her and proudly on the babe she was suckling, (I was then about three months old and a sweet little creature,) laid his hand on my mother's knee, and commenced the following dialogue :—

“He's a dear little fellow ! is he not, Mary ?”

“You may well say that, Mr. Levis. Though he is my own child, and I am his mother, I think him the sweetest little dog—oh, you little rogue, you !”

Those compliments are cursed things ! I was near paying for them with my life—being almost suffocated by the kisses with which my mother accompanied her “dog” and “rogue.”

“I was thinking, Mary——” Here my father folded his arms, and resumed his grate Lavater. My mother waited, with unusual patience, for the rest of the sentence ; but finding it not forthcoming, she broke in upon his study.

“Well, Mr. Levis ! What is it ?”

“What is what, Mary ?”

“Why, you said you were thinking——”

“Oh, that's true—that's true, wife !—Well, I was thinking, love” (re-assuming his tender looks) “that it is almost time to name the young sprig.”—and he felt the young sprig's bark.

“Certainly, Mr. Levis ; I think you are right,—and I know so many handsome names too—— !”

“Psha, wife ?” said my father, contemptuously, “What signifies your *handsome* names ? What Greek or Roman ever thought of giving his son a *handsome* name ? I tell you, Mrs. Levis, you know nothing about it.”

My mother could never brook contempt ;—she had too great a soul for that. “I know nothing about it, indeed ! Let me tell you, Mr. Levis, I know a great deal about it—yes, sir ! a great deal more about it than all your

Greeks and Romans. I can tell you that no son of mine shall be called by any of your outlandish names—shall it deary?" (addressing the 'young sprig.')

"Don't insult the ancients, Mary" said my father, with true ancient dignity—"Don't insult the ancients! more especially as you know nothing about them. I say again," he continued, waxing warm—"what signifies a *handsome* name? You know nothing about it, wife! and I can tell you, you are very much mistaken indeed, Mrs. Levis" (waxing still warmer,) "if you think that any son of *mine* shall go by such names as your Edwards, and your Henries, and Williams, and Johns!—O! I've no patience with you, woman!"—and, as he concluded his speech, he drew his chair to some distance from my mother's.

Had my mother remained silent under such abuse, she would have forfeited all claim to the respect of her sex—and justly too. But, as I have said before, she was a woman of great soul, and had no idea of remaining passive. "La! I'm sure I don't care, Mr. Levis, whether you have any patience or not; not I indeed!" (accompanying her defiance with an appropriate toss of the head :) "I've too much spirit for *that*, Mr. Levis!—Johns indeed! Do you think I'd call *my* son 'John'? I've too much taste for that, sir, let me tell you—John! Let me tell you, Mr. Levis, when my son is christened, he shall be named Roderick, or Peregrine, or—or—John!"—here she turned her back to him and addressed herself to me—"It sha'n't be called John; no it sha'n't! shall it dear?

'Ride a-cockhorse
To _____'

"O! very well, Mrs. Levis; do as you please, ma'm! do just as you please, ma'm! I see what has corrupted you.——"

Ghost of Penthesilea! who can describe the mighty ire that shook my mother's frame, as steam'd, from forth her

husband's jaws sepulchral, corruption's horrid—sound? As when some mastiff's fangs have clasped a panther's snout;—the noble beast, stung to the quick with agony, roars out amain, lashes her panting sides with vaccine tail, and scatters on the winds the dust about. Now here, now there—now here, now there, again—she swings Molossus round; but still adheres the unyielding cur; till gathering all her strength, in one resistless struggle, she casts him on the earth a helpless prey.—Thus swell'd with awful rage the breast of Mistress Levis;—her eyes shot cinders, and her swollen cheeks threaten'd explosion dire; while towards her husband's nose her fist outstretch'd menac'd flat ruin to its bridge. At length, striving with collected force, her words found utterance, and then—my mother spoke:—

“Corrupted *me*, sir?—Your insolent wretch!—I'll not put up with it! You're a vile man, Mr. Levis,—that you are! a nasty, irritable, disagreeable, contemptible——”

“That's right!” said my father, thrusting his hands into his breeches' pockets, as though he meant to bore a hole through them—“Get in a passion, wife! its very becoming to you! very!”

My mother could bear it no longer,—she burst into tears. “Was ever woman so—so insulted! You a clergyman!—a pretty cler—cler—clergyman—to treat your wedded—wife so!”

The husband was softened at once.—“Well, Mary! I did not mean to irritate you so; I was only about to say, that you were corrupted—now don't break out again—corrupted by that Roderick Random, and that Peregrine Pickle, which you are ever thumbing. Stop! let me go on now: *I* will reason a little first; and then, *you* shall begin, love.”

O woman's tears! that never-failing weapon of her weakness! Be she in any extremity—let her but use it! and greater conquests are effected than ever graced the swords of errant knights. *They* dissolved the hearts of

stones ; but it dissolveth stony hearts.—*They* dispersed whole hosts of giants ; it disperseth hosts of prejudices.—*They* broke the wand of magic, and loosed the fetters of enchantment ; it snappeth in sunder the shackles of obdurate guardians and hard-hearted parents, and layeth, as the rain-drop doth the drifting sand, the anger of a bad-tempered husband. Who may resist its edge ?——Not I, for one !—neither could my father for another. Therefore, he thus continued *sotto voce* :—

“ I was about to say then, my dear Mary, that the modern custom of giving names that are dictated by the mere fancy—without any reference whatever to the qualities, personal or mental, of the individual ; or to the circumstances which may have attended his birth ; or to any event or action by which the family may have been distinguished—is plainly and decidedly absurd. Suppose that a man had twenty sons——”

“ For shame, Mr. Levis ! how can you speak of such a thing ?”

“ Wife ! if you interrupt me any more by your silly remarks——”

It was never known—fortunately perhaps for his reputation—how my reverend father had intended to conclude this latter sentence ; for, just as his partner’s wrath began to kindle, my diaper gave way, and, the pin running into my flesh, I vented my indignation in the usual manner of babies. Of course, it required all my mother’s efforts to appease me ; and by the time she had succeeded the storm was blown over.

My father resumed :—

“ Suppose that a man had twenty sons—I only say suppose such a thing. Well, if he were speaking of one of them to a stranger, and should say ‘ my son John,’ or ‘ my son William,’ or ‘ my son James,’ or mention him indeed by any of your modern appellations, how would the stranger know to which of the twenty he meant to refer ?”

"Yes, but——" again interrupted my mother.

"But let me finish my argument first, Mrs. Levis, and then you may begin with your 'buts.' Now I say, that, were it not for the sacred rite of baptism, a man might as well have no name at all. We should follow the ancients, wife; they understood these things much better than we—as indeed they did every thing else.—Take care! don't offend me again, Mary!—The people of the East too, in modern times, manage such matters with remarkable discernment. I say we should follow *them*; and call one son, for instance, Red-hair,—another Round-back,—another Pot-belly, and so on. It would display a great deal more of taste, and would certainly be acting more according to nature; inasmuch as we find that all nations in a savage state distinguish individuals by names expressive of some peculiar qualities belonging to those individuals. I do not mean, however, dearest spouse, that we should call our son by any significant *English* word, or by any composition of significant *English* words; for that might expose us to the unjust ridicule of the ignorant; but that we should confer upon him some sonorous Greek or Latin appellation. I have, therefore, selected for him two names, viz. Prototocus and Primogenitus, either of which—and I leave it to your choice—will announce to every one that he is our first-born son."

The reader is surprised, no doubt, that Mrs. Levis was able to continue silent so long a time, especially when the reverend gentleman was speaking of his *Red-hair*, *Round-back*, and *Pot-belly*; but the fact is, that she had contented herself with silently sneering at his folly,—till he had reached his *Prototocus* and *Primogenitus*. It was then that the insulted mother could contain herself no longer. Swelling with the most majestic indignation, she thrust her infant into the cradle at the risk of its neck, and burst forth with the violence of a thunder-cloud:—

"Totocus O'Genital! was ever man so mad!—what, sir,—Mr. Levis,—Mr. Ichabod Levis," striding up to

him, with her pretty mouth enlarged to the size of his, "do you think you are to disgrace my child by any of your blasphemous Irish names? Do you think, man—? I'd—I'd rather kill him at once!"

The bolt had struck; and my poor father was for many minutes speechless from its violence; but he was too tall a man to be frightened out of his wits by so little a woman. He therefore drew himself up—by the waistband of his breeches (his usual action, when he was very much excited,)—and prepared to take his revenge. But, alas! what mortal may calculate upon the chances of an hour?—of a minute? Here stood my poor father—a living, moving, feeling man; in the prime of life, and the freshness—if not the fullness—of health: the next moment—the door opened, and in entered Mistress Meg Handy, Dairy woman, etc.

My father started back ashamed; my mother burst into tears; and Meg stood mute, for a second—but for a second only;—the next she had formed her plans.

"Why, how, now, my daughter? has any thing happened to the baby? Come, tell old Meg!"

The lady took the hint in an instant, and dried her eyes—"Nothing, I believe Meg; but—but—I was very much frightened."

The gentleman did not take the hint: he had no eyes to dry—or, more precisely, he had no eyes that needed drying—or, more correctly, his eyes needed not drying.

—By the way, before I forget it—have you ever remarked, beloved Reader, how quick-witted women are, in general; and how dull we are, all, who belong to the opposite sex? Involve a woman in any *scrape*, and, ten to one, she will find means to extricate herself: but entangle a man in the same meshes, and what does he do? He seems either ashamed or angry; and, in both cases, plays the fool.—Heigho! I suppose it is all right.—

"It was nothing, Meg, but Mrs. Levis's temper. She would not——"

"Don't believe a word he says, Meg!" sobbed my mother—"He wanted to christen the poor boy Totocus O'Genit, or some such Irish——"

"Irish!" roared my father—"why you ignorant——! it is pure Greek and Latin—pure Greek and Latin, Meg."

Meg Handy had been an important personage in the community, ever since she had professed the delivery of—the afflicted; but never had she risen to such importance, as on the present occasion. She was now become an umpire between the first man in the village and that first man's wife, a repository of the secret failings of her pastor's family,—and that too, without any dishonourable intriguing on her own part. But Meg was a prudent woman, and did not plume herself on an advantage that might, in the end, strip her of all her feathers. It was her policy to keep in favour with both parties :—the gentleman's taste was known—and now to discover what name the lady affected!

"Certainly, my children," (Meg was old,) "these are matters not worth differing on,—one man's meat, you know, is another woman's poison,—and it isn't for the like of me to dictate to my betters. To be sure, Tetic O'Goneril——"

"Prototocus, or Primogenitus!"—said my father.

"Is a very nasty name," said my mother.

"Hush, my children! Totocus Primegenital, as I was saying, is one of the most handsomest names I ever witnessed; it does one's heart good to hear it, it is so learned, as I may say." Here my father smiled, and stroked his chin; while my mother showed an alarming disposition to break the peace. "But yet, as I was saying, one woman's meat is any man's poison, and tastes will differ in the best of families. Now I dare say my dear child here," (meaning my mother,) "has every bit as beautiful an application,——" here my mother smiled and looked

triumphantly at my father, whose foot manifested a restless inclination to show Meg the way down stairs,—“but not so learned—so much Latinish, as I may say.” My father became easy again; and both father and mother looked pleased. “Now, if my dear child would but let Meg know the name she’s thinking of, I might give my poor vindict,—and I’ve seen a great many babies in my time, my children!”

“Don’t you think then, Mrs. Handy, that Roderick is a lovely name? Roderick Levis! I declare it does sound so romantic! or Peregrine?—Peregrine Levis! that’s a sweet name too.”

“Yes, my child—your taste is most superfluous—most elegant, as I may say;”—my mother smiled once more—“and so is Mr. Levis’s—most learned and Latinish;”—my father smiled too—“but, my dear children,——”

But, my dear Reader, allow me to remark in this place——

——Allow you to remark! why my dear Mr. Levis, at this rate you will never get through the chapter—and I am heartily tired of it already, I assure you. Do, pray, let alone your digressions and your moral remarks,—no one desires to hear them; and besides, Levis, you know you can introduce them in some other place, just as well.——

Ah, my dear Reader! it is in that you err. My remarks are much better off where they are already.—And besides, whether they are or not, I certainly shall not change their places;—you can read them or let them alone, just as you please; for depend upon it, I will discontinue my history altogether, or have my own way of telling it. Take your choice. But let me gently admonish you, that, if you lose my history by your own petulance, you will lose——more than you will ever find again.

Allow me then to remark, how susceptible are all men—and women too—to the influence of flattery. You may

empty a man's pockets with impunity, provided in return you fill his ear with the food it most affects. I do not think I am more ill-natured than my neighbours; yet I confess, sweet Reader, that I am fond of consoling myself for my own weakness, by observing the weaknesses of other and greater men: and during the whole course of such observations, I have never found the man so independent as to spurn at flattery—the flattery even of a fool. He feels that he is cheated; he knows

Que tout flatteur
Vit aux dépens de celui qui l'écoute;

he vows never to be so taken in again; but, poor man! he is like the raven of which I read when at school:—

Le corbeau, honteux et confus,
Jura—*mais un peu tard*—qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus.

Would you have an instance? Witness my father,—who, with all his follies, was certainly a man of education; and yet could listen with pleasure to the praises of an old midwife—praises too on his knowledge of a language, of which she knew no more than he did of a *prolapsus uteri*.

Well! It is an ill wind, they say, etc., and I have reason to feel grateful for the old hag's deceit, as you will perceive in the course of my history.—

“But, my children,” continued the lady of whom I have just spoken with so much reverence, “you seem, all this time, to have forgot the babe's interest—bless his little heart! Now, there's his rich, gouty uncle, who has no children, and ——”

“That's true! Meg has more sense than either of us,” said my father, rubbing his hands with delight.

“But his name is Jeremy!” said my mother, turning up her nose with disgust.

“Yes, my dear child; but Jeremy is a very romantic name. There was Sir Jeremy What-d'ye-call-him,

and Sir Jeremy Thingumbob,—all giant-killers ! and a great many other Sir Jeremies,” said my nurse, winking at my father very significantly.

“Indeed ! and is that true ?” questioned my mother, while her pretty face brightened up again.

“Certainly !” answered my father, while his hurt conscience tickled him sorely.

“Certainly !” echoed my nurse, while her stale jaws chuckled with triumph.

“Then, Jeremy it shall be,” said the parson, as he gently drew his chair nearer my mother.

“Jeremy Levis, it shall be,” said the parson’s wife, as she fondly threw her arms round the neck of my father.

“Master Jeremy Levis, it shall be,” said the parson’s wife’s nurse, as she carefully took the bone of contention out of its cradle.

And Mr. Jeremy Levis it is,—saith the identical Jeremy himself, as he politely ushers his reader to the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER III.

*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam;
Rectique cultus pectora roborant:
Utcunque defecere mores,
Indecorant bene nata culpæ.*

HOR.—Carm.

THE whole of this chapter I intend devoting to an Essay on the Education of Children, as I have in a manner stated in the above beautiful lines from a favourite poet. Be not frightened at this declaration, courageous Reader ; for I believe most religiously that “Example speaks louder

than Precept," and therefore purpose to instruct you, not by a series of maxims, but by an account of the proceedings of Mr. and Mrs. Levis with their son Jeremy, from the time when the latter first attempted crawling to the time when first he attended school,—the which epoch did not commence, until he had reached the interesting age of seven years.

I may be said to have commenced life under better auspices than many, inasmuch as from my earliest infancy I had instructors in two different languages—my father always using the language of severity, and my mother that of indulgence. The former maintained, as a principle, that nothing was ever gained by coaxing ; and that the numerous examples, which we have of debauched youth, were the results of a want of proper severity on the part of their parents, or other guardians : the latter, on the contrary, thought that all things were to be gained by coaxing ; and that, in every case, the dissolute habits of the young man were to be attributed to an undue restraint, which, when once broken, made liberty seem a kind of stolen pleasure—the more to be revelled in. Now, "both were right and both were wrong." The fact is, that youth is like butter (a savoury comparison, by the by,—when the latter is not *spoiled*) :—In its natural state—I mean, the state in which it appears when just formed—it is soft, and easily adapted to our purposes : apply but the slightest degree of steady heat, and it is melted—apply but the slightest degree of steady cold, and it becomes hard ; and in either of these cases is much the same—being devilishly *hard* to manage. However, I have promised not to moralize in this chapter.

It may readily be supposed that I made great progress under two such able instructors. If I cried for any thing which it was not right that I should have, and which my father refused, my mother would directly give it to me, or even snatch it from my father's hand, exclaiming that he was "ruining the child's temper." In this way I

grew up one of the most self-willed little animals that ever had legs. Whenever I did any thing wrong, my father was sure to abuse me in the most violent terms ; when my mother would as surely take my part ; and a battle was the immediate consequence. And these contests generally terminated in the same manner :—My father would shrug up his shoulders and say to my mother “ Well, Mrs. Levis ! you are spoiling that child ; ” and she would pout her lip and answer—“ O ! it will be time enough to correct him when he’s grown up.”

By the time I had completed my fifth year my love of mischief was inordinate. I destroyed every thing I could get into my power : I scribbled over my father’s sermons, burnt holes in my mother’s aprons, hung the cat up by the hind legs, and played a thousand other “ roguish tricks ” (as my mother called them.) But my chief delight lay in tormenting the company that frequented the house :—I would pin the gentlemen’s coat tails together, set fire to their wigs, etc.—and as for the ladies—“ *Age-dum ! pauca accipe—*.”

One evening, when several of the neighbours were assembled in the parlour at tea, I was called in to exhibit myself.—I was then considered as a very pretty little boy ; and it was my mother’s delight to dress me in the most fantastical manner, and thus extort praises of my beauty—and her taste—from all her visitors.—Most of the present company were women of large families : but there was one married woman in the room, who had never been *blessed* with children ; and she was more extravagant than any in her admiration of my infantile graces and—accomplishments ! However, with the common instinct of children and puppies, I perceived at once that she really disliked me ; and consequently, I considered her the most suitable person to play my pranks upon. Hitherto I had shunned all her caresses ; but just when she had received a cup of hot tea, and was beginning to stir the mixture affectedly to and fro—as elderly ladies *will* do in compa-

ny,—looking at the same time sour enough to clot the cream, I rushed affectionately towards her, and dashed the cup with its scalding contents directly in her face. The lady screamed, as well she might; *I* only danced about the room laughing most vociferously, and clapping my little hands for joy. But in the midst of my rejoicing, as if to teach me that even at my tender age human pleasure was but fleeting, my father roughly seized me by the arm, boxed my ears, and ordered me to leave the room directly, and go to bed. Do you think I obeyed him? No! I ran, as usual in such cases, behind my mother (who had seemed rather pleased at my behaviour than otherwise.) My father looked perplexed—my mother looked perfectly composed; my father looked as though he were about to say something—my mother actually did say something.

“He meant no harm, Mr. Levis, I’m sure. It was only child’s play; and he has promised never to do so again”—(patting me proudly upon the head.)

The reverend gentleman found his voice:—

“Mrs. Levis, I’m astonished at your conduct! Do you mean to encourage that boy in every kind of deviltry? Do you intend to teach him, woman, to rebel against his father?—Leave the room, sir, this instant! I insist upon it!”

I had to obey him: but my mother immediately followed me!

This is but one of a number of instances, in which my mother’s folly was directly teaching me, that, in whatever degree I might offend my father, I had only to fly to her to be shielded from all consequences.

Another year rolled by——

I say “rolled,” not because that word is generally adopted to denote the course of time—I hate vulgarity!—; but because it is particularly expressive of the season of my life for which I have used it. For, between ourselves, beloved Reader, there is a wide difference in our concep-

tions of the passage of the year at different periods of our existence. Before the age of puberty, her car *rolls* heavily onward, like an old family-coach : but after that period the party-coloured Hours, the Year's smug coachmen, whip up their prancing steeds, and hurry their mistress to her journey's end before we can detect the colour of her wheels.

Another year rolled by ; and my seventh birth-day found me as wicked as you imagine, and ignorant of all school knowledge, saving my alphabet. For though I was by no means dull, and though my father undertook to instruct me, yet—thanks to his partner's kindness !—I never took a book in my hand oftener than once a week ; and then—I used its leaves to make chickens and ferry-boats.

Ever since I had thrown off the petticoat and put on the trowsers, I had slept in a little room adjoining my mother's apartment ; and during the summer season the door of communication was left constantly open, in order to afford the air a freer circulation. One morning as I lay awake in my little bed———But here it is proper to inform you, patient Reader, that with the commencement of this paragraph I assume a new character. Hitherto you have listened to me kindly ; but you have listened to me as you would to the parrot, which repeats what it hears, but without knowing what it repeats. It is true I have had one superiority over the bird :—in understanding what I have been saying—though of its truth or falsehood I know no more than he—and that is all.* But from this time I assume a new character. You are now to listen to me as the grave historian of my own thoughts, words, and actions, responsible for every thing I utter, whether of myself or others ; for I remember, as well as if they were but the offspring of yesterday, every deed, every word, every feeling, which has been my delight or my misery “since these arms of

* As you will be assured by consulting the note at the end of the first chapter of this book.

mine had seven years' pith."—O memory! thou art a blessing and a curse!—Sweet is it, when the wings of evening brood over the drowsy earth, to hear thy gentle whisper, as thou comest on velvet foot, telling of days of by-gone pleasure, and scenes whose little roughnesses have all been softened down by the nice touch of distance; but bitter—O, bitter as the sick man's draught—yet full as wholesome! to hear that whisper changed to the hoarse voice of upbraiding, when thou chargest us with deeds, whose harshness Time's finger cannot smooth—thoughts whose blackness—but I forget myself.—

One morning, as I lay awake in my little bed cogitating on new plans of mischief, I heard my name mentioned in no gentle manner by my reverend father. "Little pitchers" saith the homely proverb "have big ears"—and you may be sure that mine played me not false. Thus he began in a voice of great solemnity:—

"Mary, are you awake?"

"Yes, my love!" softly answered my mother. She must have awoke in a very affectionate humour; for it was the first time I had ever heard her address my father by so tender an appellation.

"I will not reproach you now, Mary, for your indiscreet indulgence of Jeremy. I know it all arises from an excess of motherly affection. But do you not think that Jeremy is very ignorant for a boy of his age?"

My mother made no answer.

"Now, Mary, it is a duty we owe to God, as well as to ourselves, not merely to keep unsullied the purity of his morals; but to see that he improves those mental faculties which a wise Providence has thought fit to bestow upon him.—I say, wife, that Jeremy shall go to school this very day!"

That horrid "school" was enough for me: I waited not for more—

"I wont go to school, Ma'!" I exclaimed, rushing into her bed room—"No—I wont!"

In an instant my father's solemnity was gone—politely giving place to his passion. “What’s that you say, sir?” he roared, while his long legs, in their native state, made an awful spring from the bed—“you wont, wont you? you scoundrel!”—And simultaneously with his legs his right arm formed an acute angle: but when *he* had leaped out of the bed, *I* had leaped *into* it—and the geometrical figure was spoiled. “Come out of that bed, sir! come out this instant, you ungrateful whelp! come out, I say!” I made no answer; but, with my mother’s trembling aid, gently slid out by the other side, and flew up the garret stairs to Betty’s sheltering arms; where I lay in the utmost trepidation (though I might have known that my father was too modest a man to intrude on Betty’s privacy) till my poor mother brought me my clothes. In what way my parents settled the dispute I know not: but my mother told me that she had come off conqueror; and certain it is, that for a whole week I heard not the name of school.

But that week was like all others in the calendar—too honest to outlive its appointed period. On the day which terminated it, pleased by the matin hymns of some little feathered choristers, I generously resolved to reward their piety by a few bits of — stone. So “up I rose and donn’d my clothes;” and sallied forth to their Epicurean concert room: where whom should I meet, parading its gravelled avenues, but my reverend sire.—If the reader has paid a certain list of mine that attention which it merits, he will remember that my father rose early, leaving my mother in bed.—I wished him good morning with my usual impudence, and proceeded to distribute my alms. But he laid his hand upon my shoulder—“Stop sir! put an end to your deviltry!—we will now see who is master!” So saying, he forced me right about; and we returned together to the house.

“Here, Betty! prepare some breakfast for Master Jeremy—no sobbing sir! and hark you, sir, be pleased to take as little time at your meal as possible!”

"I don't want any breakfast"—pouted Jeremy.

"O! so much the better, sir! Put on your hat then, and come with me."

There was no opportunity to escape; for my father kept his sharp eye upon my motions: so I was obliged to accompany him, with a full heart and an empty stomach, to the Village School.

CHAPTER IV.

Quo pueri—
 Lævo suspensi loculos tabulamque læcerto,
 Ibant—

HOR.—Serm.

I do not mean to lengthen out this chapter by an account of all my foibles while at school; I shall merely mention such incidents as are absolutely necessary to the elucidation of my future history:—for credit me, dear Reader, that the record of my childish folly is as tiresome to my own self, as it can possibly be to you, and that I should never have written a line thereon, could the task by any means have been avoided. However—be the ice of our misfortunes as thick as it may, there is always one drop of consolation unfrozen in the midst; and here is yours, viz. that this is the last chapter in which you will meet Mr. Jeremy Levis, till he has thrown off his child's attire. Bear with him then, till he can welcome you in the Second Book with better entertainment.

We—namely, the Reverend Mr. Ichabod Levis and young Master Jeremy Levis—found the teacher engaged in sweeping his own school room. He looked both surprised and ashamed—surprised at our early visit, and

ashamed at being detected in doing the business of an ordinary house wench. However, my father never troubled himself with apologies. "Mr. Cordery," said he, "I intrust my son to your management. Make something of him, if you can; for I cannot. He is an idle, self-willed, ignorant boy, and needs the whip as much as any child you ever laid eyes on,—the more you use it, the better I shall like you. If he is not in your way, I will leave him with you now. You can give him a book to read till your school hour." And without waiting an answer to this singular address, he threw me on a bench, and stalked deliberately out of the room. I could have cried with pleasure; but, child as I was, I had some pride, and would rather have torn out my eyes, than suffered them to betray such weakness before a stranger. I therefore employed myself with studying the physiognomy of my future tyrant; for as to the book which had been given to me in accordance with my father's wish, you may be sure I did not take the trouble to open it.

Mr. Peleg Cordery was one of the most ludicrous looking objects you can possibly imagine for a village schoolmaster. In all my life I never have seen his equal for ugliness; and I never expect to see it. His body was neither taller nor stouter than that of a good sized boy of fourteen years of age; and the little he had of it, was cast in the vilest mould. Moreover, an accident which befel him in his youth had shortened one of his legs, and the necessity, thence arising, of wearing the heel of one shoe considerably higher than the other, added to the natural charms of his person a most graceful limp. But, to compensate for the smallness of his body, Nature had given him an enormous head—equally remarkable for beauty. The hair, (he never would wear a wig,) was red, stiff, and bushy, and combed upwards from his forehead in a pyramidal shape—like the flame from the urn of a sepulchre,—probably with an intent to add, in appearance, to his stature; the forehead rough

and remarkably prominent. The eyes were almost destitute of brows, extremely dull and projecting, and most generally surrounded by a red circle ; and the nose was the smallest that ever sat upon so large a face, and turned upwards—doubtless in disgust of his mouth ; which latter I shall take the liberty of omitting in my description.

The mind of this lovely creature was as amiable as his person. He was the very prince of schoolmasters :—his frown, in spite of his lack of eyebrows, was as potent as Jove's ; and ill fared that youngster's breech whose dull ear caught not the first note of command from Mr. Peleg.

I was for three years under the care of this worthy man ; two of which I shall not touch upon, as they were only marked on my part by an indulgence of *my* propensity for mischief, and on the part of my master by an indulgence of *his* propensity for flogging. During the last year, however, I formed a very close intimacy with a boy named Dick Hazard, who had four years advantage of me in age, and full as many in wickedness, and was the terror of every sober-minded person in the village. There was another boy in the school of the same age as Dick, but the very reverse of him in character. Edward Clayton (for such was his name) had taken an unaccountable liking to me at first, and had often warned me to avoid Hazard ; but, as the latter was very attractive in his manners, and the former, from a certain sedateness, quite the contrary, I utterly disregarded the caution—nay, became only the more attached to Dick. From that time Clayton avoided me, and Dick and I were sworn comrades. Few deeds of mischief were there which we did not attempt, and still fewer which attempted we did not accomplish.

One cold winter's evening we found a dead horse lying in the road, at a little distance from the village. It struck us immediately that the defunct animal might subserve our love of fun ; and I happening to recollect that directly opposite my father's house there lived an old couple, that

rose earlier and retired later than any other two persons in the parish, we resolved to stand the horse against their door, and leave him to his fate. Luckily for our purpose, the night was very dark ; and at a late hour, after labouring for some time, we managed to drag our prize into the village without being noticed. We then, with the greatest exertion of our feeble powers, succeeded in placing Bucephalus with his fore-legs against the door and his hind-legs beyond the large stone which served as step, steadying his position by inclining his body against one of the door-posts. Our plan succeeded perfectly—it nearly eventuated in the death of the old woman ! for when she opened the door in the morning, our steed, with amorous violence, threw his rough fore-legs round her wrinkled neck, and both horse and lady came prostrate on the floor.

I saw the whole affair from a window, but was too much alarmed to enjoy it ; yet, as the old man made no complaint to my father, I thought we had escaped. I was mistaken—as Master Peleg soon proved, to the satisfaction of both Dick and myself, by making our seats uncomfortable for the rest of the day. At every lash would the wretch exclaim, “ How does it feel, my boys—heh ? ” or “ How do you like tricks upon old people—heh ? ” and when he had finished the exercise, panting with his exertions, he said to us, “ And now, hark ye, my lads ! your next *feat* shall carry you out of my school ! ”—and he laughed at his own bad jest so long and heartily, that several little boys actually cried with terror.

Dick and I remembered the threat, and, completely tired of the service, resolved to procure our discharge the very next day—and in a manner, too, most soothing to our injured *feelings* ; and as there was a lad about to quit the school at this very time, (named Harry Smith,) not quite sixteen years old, but remarkably active and powerful, we agreed to admit him into our confederacy.

The next day smiled upon three as resolute heroes as ever graced the annals of rebellion; and the only boy in the school that would have opposed us, Edward Clayton, being fortunately absent, we did not wait a moment to put our plot into execution. We approached the tyrant's throne together—which was a little platform that the little man had raised, at one end of the room, to elevate his little body;—I placed myself behind him, within reach of his girdle;* Dick disposed himself at his right hand; and Harry Smith took his station below the platform.

"What does all this mean—heh? what do you want?" gruffly asked the Cæsar.

"I want you, sir, to explain me a passage in my Latin, sir," meekly replied conspirator Dick.

The unsuspecting wretch turned reluctantly round to help Dick through his pretended difficulty, and just then I slipped the girdle over his head, and bound his puny arms. That was the signal. Dick gagged him, and Smith tied his legs together. We then fastened him to one of his own benches with a cord provided for the occasion, and, each of us drawing a cowhide from under his waistcoat, set to work, exclaiming at every blow, "How does it feel, Peleg? How does it feel, my lad—heh? How like you tricks upon *young* people—heh?" while every now and then Dick would peep under his face, and cry out to me, "Give it to him, Jerry! it doesn't hurt the old rascal at all; he's laughing at us." Soon half of the school, finding that Peleg could not see them, (he being bound with his face downwards,) took an active share in

* So Mr. Peleg was fond of calling a strap of his own invention, wherewith he was wont to bind the arms of his pupils when he gave them Practical Illustrations of his system of morals. It was nothing more than a long strip of leather, with a hole in one extremity, through which passed the other extremity, forming a kind of *slip-knot*. Whenever a new pupil was added to the school, Mr. Peleg, who was fond of displaying his wit, would address him thus, producing the strap:—"You see this girdle, young gentleman! well, I hope you will never have occasion for it. I call it so from the celebrated girdle of Venus, because when a lad is *graceless*, I make use of it to *re-form* him—he, he, he!" (grinning 'horrible a ghastly smile.')

our sport, while the rest looked on in silent but deep-felt enjoyment. One of the boys emptied an ink bottle into his hair, another threw ashes on his sacred head,

Which with such vengeful sorrow he shook off,
His face still combating with tears and frowns,
The badges of his pain and anger;
That had not Hate, with potent reason, steel'd
The hearts of boys, they must perforce have melted,
And Rage herself have laugh'd too much for flogging;

while, to sum up all, Dick Hazard took the pan of warm water which stood upon the stove, emptied into it the contents of every inkstand in the room, and then threw the vile mixture over his viler person. As if that were the preconcerted signal, the whole school instantly broke up; and Dick and I, having previously ungagged the sufferer that he might roar for help, bid him an affectionate farewell, pulled down the stovepipe upon him, and then left him to make the most of his *acute perceptions*.

——Thus endeth my life at school, and the First Book of my history.

BOOK SECOND.



SIXTY YEARS OF THE LIFE

OF

JEREMY LEVIS.

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

Peace be at your labour, *honest fishermen!*

Pericles, Prince of Tyre.

“WHAT, Edward! will you not even wait till I may thank you?”

Still he made no answer, but glancing his eye from Dick to me, with a look that plainly said, There can be no words between Edward Clayton and the friend of such a man as Hazard, turned coldly round, and departed.

The story is soon told.

Like all other idlers, I was fond of fishing; and Dick being similarly disposed, you will not wonder that a summer's morning should find us on the banks of a stream which wandered at some two or three miles distance, from the village. While silently engaged in our humane diversion, a little boy joined us with a basket on his arm.

“Have you caught any thing?” he civilly asked.

"Yes," answered I, with equal civility,—“and there it goes again,” as I seized his basket and threw it into the stream.

Dick laughed loudly, and swore it was “a damned good trick;” while the poor little fellow wrung his hands, and cried most bitterly. I was fond of mischief, but not hard-hearted; and seeing the latter’s distress, I stripped off my clothes and plunged into the water; for, though it was deep, I apprehended no danger, as I was an excellent swimmer, and the object at no great distance. However, just as I touched the handle, a violent cramp seized my limbs, and I became powerless. In this extremity, I called on Dick to help me; but that warm friend coolly answered, “Keep up, Jerry, till I get some help!” and ran off to procure the aid of others; while the boy, who had no great reason to care for me, cried out in absolute anguish, “O, sir! never mind my basket! never mind my basket!”

For a few minutes I was able to maintain my head above the water by the use of my arms; but *they* at length proved powerless, and no help seemed nigh. O, with what agony I gazed upon the green banks, that were so near, and yet so far for me, and thought that never more I should behold them! A crowd of maddening fancies came galloping through my brain in rapid succession, each one striving to push before the rest;—the memories of my past days, in which I had never done a good deed; the images of my parents, that seemed to curse me for my ingratitude; and lastly, the future, with all its hitherto dim horrors most frightfully distinct.—I could bear no more: I tried to shriek, but could not: my mouth grew parched; and my eyes seemed straining from their sockets for want of light; and my brain reeled; and I felt the cold brine bubble in my ears, and pass my eyes—my head: and then came the gasp of suffocation, as though I were struggling with the night-mare; and I clung to the basket, in the mad hope that it might save me: and then ———

* * * * *

When I came to my senses, I found myself upon a pallet, in a miserable hut. By my side were ;—a rough-looking man, who had evidently been aiding in my recovery ; and the little boy, whose injury had been so dearly revenged, smiling through his tears ; and Dick Hazard, looking as usual ; and—Edward Clayton ! his clothes and hair dripping water, and his mild eyes lighted up with pleasure. Then I knew who had preserved me.

“ Dear Edward ! and do I owe my life to you ? ” I sobbed—for my heart was full to bursting. He pressed my hand without speaking, and prepared to leave the room.

“ What—Edward ! will you not even wait till I may thank you ? ”

Still he made no answer ; but glancing his eye from Dick to me, with a look that plainly said, there can be no words between Edward Clayton and the friend of such a man as Hazard, turned coldly round, and departed.

CHAPTER II.

Th' adventure of the bear and fiddle
Is sung, but breaks off in the middle.

Hudibras.

WHEN the accident mentioned in the preceding chapter befel the unfortunate Jeremy, he had completed his sixteenth year : yet it had no permanent effect upon his character ; it only damped its ardour—while he was wet.

His genius now—

——But Clayton, Edward Clayton—what became of him ?——

O, my best endeavours to discover him were fruitless ; I never saw him afterwards, till—

——Till when, good Jeremy?——

Be easy, sweet Reader ; you shall know all about it in due season : and as for Dick Hazard—I tell you this to prevent any further interruption on your part—when I reproached him for his indifference to my fate, he answered like a true philosopher—“I knew that *I* could not save you ; and we might both have been drowned together.” Remember, Reader—Dick was at this time twenty years old, and as powerful in frame as most men are at thirty !

——Of course, you had nothing more to do with him?——

Psha ! let me continue my history.

My genius now soared to higher flights—

“Soared!”—Soul of Prosopopæia ! who would have supposed that I, Jeremy Levis, who abhor the very name of vulgarity, would have stooped to handle such a figure—a figure so distorted, so worn, so daubed by the filthy thumbs and forefingers of every piddling writer !—Feathers and falcon-beaks ! the merest schoolboy that thinks he has a genius makes an eagle of it at once ! though, alas ! when the poor thing attempts to “soar,” like many another ambitious chicken, it runs *foul of the earth* again. It is all owing, I verily believe, to that high-minded philosopher (he should have been tarred and—feathered) who made man a plucked fowl. Ever since his time, philanthropists have been endeavouring to restore human nature to its primitive state by adding plumage. Well—be it so ! if a man choose to give his genius wings wherewith it may fly away from him, I cannot help it : but, thank God ! I am not so vain as to plume myself on any resemblance which may rank me in the order of Gallinae—or of Anseres (if you prefer the latter.) Therefore, I will not say “my genius now soared to higher flights,” but I will say, *my genius now mounted a better steed*. I advise all writers of all classes, but especially the writers

of novels, to adopt this figure, and for the following two reasons :.....

1st. Because Pegasus himself was a horse—although a flying one :

2d. Because horses are of various qualities ; whereas all eagles are alike—in disposition.

Wherefore :—If you write gravely, you say your genius has mounted or straddled a sober steed ; if gaily—a gay, prancing steed ; if turgidly—an Anti-Pythagorean steed—i. e. a steed which has been fed on beans ; and of your style be barren—you have only to go the nearest common and select a Rozinante—and so on, “to the end of the chapter.”

My genius now mounted a better steed. I longed for knighthood from the hands of the Lady Venus, or, more properly speaking, its spurs. But, be that as it may, I longed to wear her colours : and I did not despair of success ; for I thought myself an exceedingly good-looking youth.—You smile, fair Reader. Well, if you would have your doubts resolved, be good enough to turn the leaf ; for a proper sense of his own dignity will not suffer Jeremy Levis to tie his picture to the fag-end of a chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Look here, upon this picture——
Hamlet.

GEORGE ! bring hither the large mirror.—There, set it directly before me. Psha !—so—that will do ; now leave me.—Stay ! you may take it back, George ; I think I shall have no occasion for it.—Heigho ! I am not what I was, and must paint from memory.

To begin with the head. My hair was black and soft, with a slight tendency to curl ; my forehead neither high nor low, but extremely well formed ; my brows finely arched, and very expressive ; my eyes black and full of the devil ; my nose rather too long for the rest of my features ; my mouth good enough for a man ; and my complexion so delicate, that a facetious old woman of the neighbourhood was wont to call me “smock-face.” My figure was short and slightly made, but symmetrical. In a word, I took after my mother in every thing but my nose, and that was purely my father’s. Now, sweet one, are your doubts resolved ? You smile at my vanity !—O, that smile will soon vanish, when you consider that I am praising what no more exists. Now—the shrivelled hand of Winter hath dusted thick the snow flakes mid my raven locks ; and bald-headed Time, and Care, his sallow sister, have fretted many a wrinkle in these pallid cheeks : soon too, my eyes will lose what little lustre they have left, and nothing will remain to mark the site of former beauty, save this lone watch-tower, so often blown by——handkerchiefs,—my mighty nose. Nay, if you are disgusted with the old man’s visage, look to the opposite page and forget it.

CHAPTER IV.

— σὺ δ' ἐμοὶ
 Φίλιππον, ὃ ἰκετεύω,
 Ἀνοιξον, ἀσπάζου με· διὰ τοι σὲ πόνους ἔχω.
 Ὡ χρυσοδαίδαλλον ἐμὸν μέλημα,
 Κίπριδος ἕρως, μέλιτ' ἄ Μούσης, Χαρίτων θρόνισμα,
 Τρυφῆς πρόσωπον,
 Ἀνοιξον, ἀσπάζου με· διὰ τοι σὲ πόνους ἔχω.
 ARISTOPH.—*Concion.*

Οὗτος, τί ποιεῖς ἑστὸν, ὑπὲρ τοῦ τέλους ;
 ARISTOPH.—*Nudes.*

No cure, no stop ! —————

————— He will not hear till feel.

Timon of Athens:

ONE of my intrigues, though low in its origin, raised my character to a very high pitch in the estimation of the neighbours. The abigail that officiated in the house next to my father's was very pretty, and being a girl of fine taste, conceived a friendship for Master Jeremy. To facilitate our intercourse, she agreed to leave open the scuttle in the roof of her house, that I might thus find my way to her apartment; for the roof was continuous with that of my father's house, which was likewise provided with a scuttle. At midnight, then, I slipped off the more cumbrous part of my dress, for comfort's sake (it being then the middle of July), stole through the garret on tip-toe, for fear of alarming Betty, opened the scuttle, and crept out upon the neighbouring roof. To my mortification I found the promised entrance closed. I knocked softly—I knocked loudly; but it did not open: I called softly—I called loudly; but received no answer. Tired at length, and cursing the faithlessness of the sex, I crept

back ; but what was my surprise and indignation to find my return prevented, either through the jealousy of Betty, or according to a concerted plan between her and my friend ! Imagine my situation—imagine me sitting upon a house-top, half naked, afraid to move lest I should roll off, and with the comfortable expectation of watching till morning. I thought I should go mad with vexation : but my philosophic position awakened better thoughts. I began to moralize : I imagined satires against the female sex ; and I vowed inwardly never to have any transactions with them : and then I looked upon the stars, and grew poetic ; and then I shut my eyes, and grew—sleepy ; and twenty times at least—“ horresco referens ! ”—I was in danger of falling. At length the shame-revealing morn drew aside the curtain of night, and bade the world awake. If you have ever been in a similar situation—I beg your pardon, sir—if you have ever sat out the night in *study*, and felt the cool breath of the morning blow upon your burning eyes, and parched lips, and feverish skin, you can readily imagine what I mean, when I declare that my sensations amounted to absolute ecstasy when I saw the first faint blush begin to tinge the virgin East. But those sensations were of no long continuance ; for one of your good early risers happening to discover a strange looking object on the parson's house-top, having what appeared to be its body erect and covered with a shirt, and two long things like legs hanging down the sides of the roof in becoming nudity, called to one of his neighbours to look at it. This latter called to another ; and he to another ; and in a very short time a little knot of people had collected opposite the house. Two minutes more—and I verily believe I would have jumped into the garden : but, fortunately for my neck and your improvement, before those minutes had elapsed, the scuttle slowly opened, and gave to view——

Ah, dear Reader, I must stop ! My fingers itch to make you feel my power. Yes ! I would fain leave you to fill

up that ——— yourself: but I know you would supply the cavity with my father's pump-handle nose and church-yard mouth.

——Well, Jeremy! and suppose that I did:—they would answer, would they not?——

Certainly, sweet Reader, certainly. Your taste is most excellent—"most superfluous," as my nurse would say—and I wish that I might follow it. Then, what scenes would I paint? I would stand my father in the garret, in his shirt—his bright eyes flashing lightnings, his long nose portending hurricanes, and his wide mouth threatening to devour said nose—, with a stout birch rod in one hand, and slim Master Jeremy in the other; and Jeremy too in his shirt—his mischievous eyes dull with shame, his paternal nose pale with terror, and his maternal mouth opening from affectionate sympathy with said nose—, with the tail of his father's shirt in one hand, and the end of his father's rod in the other. I would———but, alas! I am not writing a romance, and the dignity of history requires me to give the truth, which is:—

———the night-cap'd head of Betty.

"Why, Jerry! is that you?—Mercy on me, how came you there?"

I made no answer, but leaped through the opening, and attempted to pass her. But my Fotis was not to be treated so cavalierly: she took me by the arm, drew me into her room, seated me beside her on her yet warm bed, and repeated her question. Still I played mute. "O very well, Master Jerry! if you're so cross, I shall keep you here till you grow good humoured again, that's all." So saying, she locked the door, and put the key under her pillow. I was convinced that I might as well yield, so began in turn—"What the devil did you fasten me out for, Betty?"

"La, now! who was to know you were out there, Mas-

ter Jerry? I never knew you to hang shirts out a-airing before!"

"Come, come, Miss Betty; no fibs! I'll be sworn that you knew I was there—I see it by your eyes!"

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Master Jeremy! so you ought! to excuse a poor body so! I never thought that you would treat me so, Jerry! no, never!" and the crocodile shed tears:—O, woman's tears!—but I believe I have spoken on that subject before, sweet Reader; and, if I mistake not, I told you at the same time that I could never resist their power.

"Well, Betty, you need not be so angry!"

"Haven't I cause to be angry, you ——? Be done, Master Jeremy! Be done with your nonsense!—I should think you had enough of it last night.—Be done I say, Jerry!—If you don't—I'll slap your face for you!"

I was determined to seal our reconciliation with a kiss; and I succeeded.

——The more shame for you, Jeremy. You should have had more spirit than to be so soon reconciled,—and with a woman too so much your senior!——

Yes—but, my dear Reader, you forget that I owed my birth, in some degree, to Betty—and besides, she was a very pretty woman.

——O, that alters the case!——

It was with dread that I descended to the breakfast room. However, the meal went off as usual;—my father played his part in silence; then rose from his chair, asked my mother if she purposed going to church, and receiving an answer in the negative, bade me get ready, and retired.

To church then I went. Of the first part of the sermon I heard not a word: but towards the middle my attention was suddenly arrested, by a passage which recalled to mind my late experiment on the specific gravities of bodies.

"Believe me, my brethren," said the preacher, "it is as natural for man to pray, as it is for him to eat, to drink, to sleep, or to exercise any of his bodily functions. I will not refer you, in support of this opinion, to the history of every nation that has been since God first called the chaos into shape: I need not tell you, that the first speculation in which man—pure, unsophisticated man—indulges, is to fancy some unseen being, or beings, whose will directs his slightest motion—whose breath may loosen, in an instant, the feeble holds whereon Existence builds her spider-web: I need not trace for you the history of religious opinion:—no, my brethren! I refer you to your own hearts. Ask *them* in the solitude of the closet: ask them in the lonely hour, when the grave of night hath shut up this lower world from the eyes of body and soul, and they turn in their desolation to the bright world above them: ask them in the hour of danger: ask them in the hour of sorrow and sickness: ask them—in the hour of death!"

"I may be answered—but not by *them*! O, no—not by them! that I name but the prejudices of education. Why then has not the strong mind shaken off these prejudices like many others? Fools! will they say it has?—Trust them not, my brethren; they would persuade you of what they believe not themselves. They are men, who would rise above their fellows, by daring the majesty of God himself—men, who, in their pride of intellect, would build another Babel to confront the battlements of Heaven,—or—they are men, who voluntarily close their eyes against the future; for to *them* to look—were madness. Idiots! they perish by their own folly——

"——σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν——."

My father paused to give full effect to his learning. I looked around me. The male part of the congregation displayed a most knowing expression of countenance; while the females held their mouths open to catch

every particle of the classic sound, or perhaps to catch —flies. But, unfortunately for Jeremy, there were in the pew before him two critics, who must needs comment on his father's Greek.

"I say, Jim!" whispered one of them,—“what does he mean by that?”

"Hush!" gravely answered Jim—"it's something indecent. He says it in Hebrew, that the ladies mayn't understand it. He's a hard chicken, is Parson Levis!"

The force of Jim's explanation was overpowering:—down fell my gravity, and I laughed aloud. Just at that critical moment my father re-commenced his discourse: but my extreme good humour caused his sentence to terminate in rather a singular manner.

"Yes, my brethren? I say to you—leave the church this instant, you profane ——!"

Reader! place yourself for a few seconds in the situation of Jeremy Levis; and you may, possibly, form some idea of his pleasurable sensations, as he took his way to the church door, through the admiring congregation.

My father came not home till the dinner was on the table. He looked at the single dish with no amorous longing, muttered, "Hum! fish!—nothing but fish!" took his seat, crumbled some bread for a few minutes, and left the apartment, without taking the least notice of his culprit son. In about an hour afterwards, he stalked in again.

"What! not done yet? Here you've been more than an hour eating your meal, and I have'nt tasted any thing since breakfast."

"Why, it's your own fault, I'm sure, Mr. Levis!" said my mother, "There's some nice fish for you, and it's warm yet."

"Fish! you know that I never eat fish; you might have got something else for me!"

"And you might have told me, Mr. Levis, that you were coming home to dine. You never have dined home

before on a Sunday ; and fish was the cheapest thing I could get—and I know you love to save.”

“Yes ! and you know too that I hate nastiness ;—a pretty gown that, to be sure, to sit at my table in !” and without giving my mother time to answer, he turned to me—“And you, sir ! is it not enough that you are seen at day break on the roof of a house, cutting capers in your shirt-tail ; but you must disgrace me in church too ? Come sir,” (laying his hand on my collar,) “I have winked at your enormities too long ; I will begin the week with correcting them.” As my father was preparing to make good his word, and my mother to counteract his harmless intention, the door opened, and Betty announced that Mrs. Maline wished “to see Mr. Levis at the door, for a few minutes.” He accordingly left the room. My mother took the alarm (for this Mrs. Maline was the very dame whose face I had scalded some dozen years before ; of which achievement she still bore the becoming scars.) “I wonder what the ugly thing can want : I am sure it’s for no good. She has always hated you, Jerry, for the little innocent trick you played her. You’d better jump out of the window before your father returns.” I was altogether of my mother’s opinion, and seconded the motion ; but, before it could be carried, my father entered and put his veto upon it. “Follow me, sir, if you please !” My mother seemed paralyzed by her husband’s resolute bearing ; she made no effort to prevent me ; and I obeyed the command. My father made me ascend the garret stairs, and following himself, locked the door after him. “Throw off your coat, sir !” I obeyed him without hesitation ; partly through fear—partly through the respect, which my age taught me was due to his commands. Reader ! I cannot make you feel what I felt on that trying occasion ; nor would I—nay ! I am not joking—:—at every blow my blood boiled within me, and my hands raised themselves involuntarily, as though some devil were tempting me to rebel against my parent.

Great God ! I thank thee, that I was able to resist the tempter !—When my father was tired of his amusement, he addressed me thus :—

“Jeremy—this is the last time I shall ever lay hand on you. I never thought that, at your age, you would oblige me to have recourse to measures so degrading ; nor—did I ever think you would disgrace my honest name by—stealing !” And the poor man burst into tears.

“Sir——?”

“Yes, sir—I say, by stealing !”

“Father, so may God——!”

“Stop sir ! add not the sin of lying to your present guilt. Mrs. Maline—— Be done, insolent boy ! hear me out.—Mrs. Maline has proved to me, that you and that rascal Hazard have robbed her of a letter containing money. You may be grateful, wretched boy, that she has sought redress from no stronger arm than mine.”

He paused, evidently expecting an answer : but it was then too late ; and I suffered him to leave me without a word.

On what a slender pivot turns our destiny ! Fools that we are—when we think it points the course ourselves would wish, a word, a breath may in an instant alter its direction—and——forever ! Had my father listened to me, when moved by his tears I was ready to prove my innocence, you would not now have the satisfaction of knowing, beloved hearer, how well I can mingle the useful with the agreeable :—but, *he* dried his eyes, and would not hear—I folded my arms, and would not speak—and you, God bless you ! open your ears, and enjoy my adventures.

My resolution was formed in an instant. I rushed from the house—but first resumed my coat.—That devil Pride, in the agony of his wounds, was kicking sorely at my breast, and I ran like a madman through the street. The first person I met was the very person I wanted.

"Dick," said I, as I drew him down a lane, "I am going away;—my father has——damnation!—he has flogged me, Dick! I'll never set foot in his house again!"

Dick was silent for some minutes; and a smile—I knew not whether of derision or joy—curled his thin lips. At length, he exclaimed, "Jerry, you are right; perfectly right! Your father has treated you like a slave, and you should resent it. What say you? Shall we seek our fortunes together?—I am as sick of my uncle's severity as you are of your father's; we will set out this very night."

I was too well pleased with the prospect of a companion not to assent. "This very hour, if you like!"

"Stay! we cannot go till dark; nor even then without money.—How much have you?"

"Only a few half-pence."

"And I have only a few shillings! This wont do, Jerry,—we shall starve before we are out of reach of pursuit. I'll tell you what you must do"—he added, almost in a whisper:—"You must get your father's purse, Jerry."

Never was I so shocked; I could hardly believe I had heard him rightly.

"With all my wickedness, Richard Hazard, I never was a thief."

He coloured violently, and affected to laugh, "Why man, you need not get so angry! Where's the mighty crime in stealing from such a mean old rascal as your father?"

Reader! I never loved my father; but I had the pride common to every man,—and an insult offered to any member of my family was an insult to myself. I struck Hazard. The least I expected was a blow in return; but he only drew back—turned very pale—shuddered—bit his lip—and said, slowly, with a look that made my blood run cold—"You know I might take ample revenge, if I chose, young man;—and I would do

it, to your satisfaction, did I believe you were in your senses when you struck me. When you are cool, sir, I will speak further with you." Dick's moderation made me repent of what I had done. "If I thought," said I, "that you did not mean to insult me—— Dick, I'm sorry; there's my hand." He touched it coldly; and resumed his usual manner.

"Answer me one question, Jerry. What constitutes a crime? Is it not the consequences of the action?"—He paused a moment; but, receiving no answer, thus continued:—"Why is false accusation deemed a crime? Surely not because of the act itself; but because by such act we injure the character of our neighbour, and thereby ruin him. If I can find amusement in slandering the innocent, I am more to be laughed at than punished—provided my arrow be harmless. What makes fornication a crime? the mere indulgence of an animal desire without the sanction of marriage? Is it not the miseries, which we thereby entail upon our fellow creatures? And stealing—why is *it* condemned? but that the effect of its license were the same as with all other crimes:—to subvert the good order of society—to make this world one great desert, where every man's hand should be against his neighbour and his neighbour's hand against him. Now suppose that you take—for the sake of argument only—suppose that you take from your father some two, or three pounds:—Do you harm him thereby?—No!—Are you likely to be tempted, by your success with him, to steal—I mean, to *take* from others?—No!—Is not the case, indeed, similar to that of the officer, who, instead of receiving his rations in bread or firewood, prefers their worth in money? You are under your father's protection, and he must support you—and at a considerable expense; you leave him, and are willing to take, in lieu of that support, a trifling sum to keep you from starving!—Surely, there's no harm in that, dear Jerry!"

I was completely blinded by Dick's sophistry ; for I remembered that the good old Cordery had pronounced him the smartest lad in his school—when he chose to study, and decidedly the best reasoner, and therefore I yielded to his superior judgment. In a word, I promised to give myself up to his guidance, and to meet him, in an hour, at the garden gate.

CHAPTER V.

Sed hoc primum sentio, nisi in bonis amicitiam esse non posse—

Cic.—De Amicitia.

MEEK-VISAGED Even had just unloosed her apron-string to cover up the drowsy Earth ; and beldame Care was stooping o'er the poppy-beds, culling, with half-reluctant hand, the flowers to make her grateful posset ; and cocks and hens, together perch-ward bound, bore on their blood-red gills that self-contented air, which showed the day's accounts had been closed with pure consciences, —when Jeremy Levis, fearing, with true filial piety, to disturb his parents, stole softly from his father's house, bearing in his arms a little bundle of clothes and a mahogany cradle.

—A mahogany cradle ! In the name of Luçina, how came you in the family way ?—

Never mind my ways—Read on.

I found Dick waiting for me.—“Ha ! you've got the cradle, heh !—Now then, for our revenge !—But first” (added he) “let us hear how you've written the note.”

“Mr. Richard Hazard and Mr. Jeremy Levis present
“their most respectful compliments to Mistress Maline :—

"Hearing of Mrs. Maline's confinement, they take the liberty of offering their congratulations on the happy occasion; and, herewith, beg leave to request her acceptance of the cradle, for the use of the young Maline.

"Should the house of Maline be *doubly* blessed in the labour of its lovely mistress, they hope she will suffer them to furnish the second cradle—as a slight testimony of the gratitude which they owe her for her late noble defence of their characters."

Just as I had finished repeating the above, a pious worshipper of Bacchus happened to pass; who, despising the walk of ordinary men, was indulging his genius—like the poets of the present day—by many fanciful deviations from the *right* line. Being no hypocrite in his devotion, he engaged for a glass of liquor to carry the cradle and note to Mrs. Maline's.

We followed him and saw it done to our satisfaction: * then, choosing the least frequented road, we left the village without a sigh.

For two whole hours we continued to walk with great rapidity, and in unbroken silence; for my companion seemed no way inclined to disturb me, perceiving me to be engaged with that obtrusive friend REFLECTION, whom I had picked up by the road. You may well imagine that my conference with the latter was none of the most agreeable. First REFLECTION began, and, in a reproachful voice, asked me how I could have the cruelty to leave my father in the manner I had done. This officiousness was offensive; and I answered in a tone that was meant to silence the fellow, that I did not care a straw about my father, nor did my father care a straw about me; so that nothing was lost between us. But REFLECTION is an impudent knave—as you well know, if you have ever met him "*misere discedere quærens*"—and was not to

* To appreciate the richness of our revenge, the reader must remember that the lady was barren.

be daunted so easily. "Come, come, Mr. Levis!" said he—"this bullying will not do with me, sir. How will you excuse your conduct to a fond mother?"....."By your own words. Have you not often told me, that the way to gain a child's affections, was not to indulge him to his own discomfort? Nay! further—did you not say that **EXPERIENCE**, who, as you are fond of boasting, acts the part of Mentor to you, had confirmed the same? Therefore, as I cared not a straw for my father, so I cared not a rush for my mother."....."Softly, sweet sir!"—exclaimed **REFLECTION**, in a sneering tone that almost drove me mad." Do you remember how I caught you, sir, at your father's desk—with one hand on the key, and the other on the handle—afraid to open it,—looking first over one shoulder and then over the other, like a thief as you were? Do you remember how I upbraided you; and how you answered me with the sophistry of Dick Hazard; and, when I was proving to you that Dick lied, how you began to whistle—to drown the sound? Do you remember too, how you shuddered, when you grasped the purse; and stole from the room, afraid to breathe—as though your lungs might betray you? and how I cried after you, "shame! shame!"?—O, it was a noble feat, sir! a most noble feat!"....."A most noble feat!"—echoed the insinuating voice of **PRIDE**, who had joined us at this part of the conference—"You have finely confirmed your father's opinion of his son's villainy! And the step you are now taking—depend upon it, 'twill exalt your reputation to a dazzling height in the eyes of the charitable villagers—O, cunning Jeremy! most cunning Jeremy!"

My two tormentors continued to upbraid me, in spite of all my efforts. I pushed them from me with violence—they still returned: I whistled; I sang;—their taunts were heard far above my music: I even stopped my ears—but their cursed croaking was as plain as ever. At last I grew desperate; and I verily believe I should have burst with vexation; but, luckily for my insides, Dick turned to me

all of a sudden, and spoke—when both **PRIDE** and **REFLECTION** gave a yell of disgust and scampered away.

We were now at a spot where two roads branched off from the one whereon we had been travelling, and—as well as I could guess—about six or seven miles from the village.

“How much money did you manage to get?” abruptly asked Dick.

“I don’t know,” I answered; “I took the purse without opening it.”

“Suppose then,” said Dick, “that we rest here, and count it by the light of the moon?”

I made no reply; but put the purse into his hand. No sooner did he touch it than he raised his fist and knocked me down; then leaping upon me, beat me without mercy, till he could beat no longer—when the villain left me—saying, as he departed, “Remember, young man, not to be so ready with your blows in future!”

Sore though I was, I felt somewhat relieved as I followed his retiring figure with my eyes, and knew that the stolen purse went with him. I had no time to moralize however; for, almost immediately, I heard the sound of wheels; and, in a little while after, a wagon drove up with two men in it. It stopped as soon as it was opposite to me; and a rough, manly voice exclaimed, “Look there, George! what’s that under the tree?”.....“O, drive on, Townsend!” said, in an impatient tone, the party addressed, “it’s only some drunken beast of a fellar.”... “It may not be,” resumed the first voice. “Hallo, my man! What’s the matter with ye?” I tried to answer; but could not make myself heard—I was so faint. “There, Townsend! didn’t I tell you he was drunk? Come drive on! or you’ll never get home to night.”....“Stop!” cried the first voice again, “Hold the reins, while I get out and see; for I’m sure I heard him groan.” The man accordingly approached me, and raised me by the arm; but, when he learned that I had been robbed of my purse and

nearly murdered, he lifted me with my bundle into the wagon, by the aid of the grumbling George, and, bidding the latter drive, supported me on the seat with all the tenderness of a father—I mean, a *tender* father.

We rode for about an hour with great rapidity, sorely to my discomfort—but I would not complain; and after stopping but once, to leave George at his own home, arrived at the house of my good Samaritan.

CHAPTER VI.

He grew canty, and she grew fain;
But little did her auld minny ken
What thir stee twa together were say'n,
When wooing they were sa thrang.

The Gaberlunzie Man.

THOUGH furnished with a comfortable bed, I could not sleep that night, owing to my bruises. Therefore I resolved for once to obey the Samian;* and the result was not very satisfactory. What grieved me most was the conduct of Dick Hazard. I did not mind the loss of his friendship—O, no! a wise man never cries himself into an opthalmy because his bubble bursts;—he blows up another as fast as he can.—I was only sorry I had been fool enough to believe in it. I now saw the reason of Clayton's fixed aversion for my companion; and even did not scruple to give credit to Mrs. Maline's accusation—that is to say, as far as concerned him alone. To this I added the baseness of his revenge as taken on my car-

* Μηδ' ὕκνον μαλακοῦσιν ἐπ' ὀμμάτων προσέβησθαι,
Ἡστὶ τῶν ἡσυχῆς ἐργῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιβλεῖν.

FRANK. AUREA DICTA.

cass : and casting up the account, found, as sum total, that Dick was no better than a *born villain*.

These reflections were of so consoling a nature that I actually commenced my slumbers when the sun had finished his ; and dreamed :—that Dick was some hideous, non-descript animal, on whose back I was saddled—one minute with my face to his head, and the next with my face to his tail. Onward I rode, mightily pleased with my situation, till we came to a large cooking-stove, around whose ample body several scullions, of most suspicious make, were manœuvring,—some poking the glowing coals with pokers that looked like human bones—others, with similar utensils, stirring the contents of a huge cauldron which simmered upon the stove—while others stood by, ready to skim the frothing liquor with *calabashes* made of skulls, having a shank bone fitted to the foramen occipitale by way of handle. The moment we arrived there, methought my Bucephalus showed a strong family resemblance to Satan ; and I had scarcely traced the likeness, when he caught me by the heel, as Thetis did Achilles, with an intent no doubt to add me to the stew. The horrid idea of being served up at table, smothered perhaps in onions, was too much to bear in silence, and I yelled most vociferously. The vision fled—I opened my eyes upon the mild countenance of Mr. Townsend.

He anxiously inquired how I had passed the night, and when I told him, insisted upon my lying in bed for the rest of the day ; an injunction with which I had no great difficulty in complying. He then politely intimated his desire to know who I was, and the circumstances of my misfortune. After some hesitation, I told him that I was the son of a gentleman who lived at the distance of four or five miles from the spot where he had found me ; that having passed a holyday at home, I was preparing to return to my duties by the usual conveyance, *my father's carriage*, when a schoolmate who lived in the neighbour-

hood proposed that we should return on foot ; that having gained my father's approbation of this proposal, I had tied up my clothes in a little bundle, and set out with my companion, just at the close of the afternoon ; but, having imprudently boasted of a considerable sum of money which I had obtained from my parents, I had been attacked by my companion, when at a sufficient distance from home, and easily overpowered.

"Honesty is the best policy," says the proverb ; but, if so, 'tis a policy we are seldom statesmen enough to follow. It is "Diamond cut diamond," says Jeremy Levis :—we commit a sin, and, becoming conscious of its deformities when too late, put another upon top of it to hide them. I say *we* ; for if you think yourself, sweet Reader, too honourable to act so, why—you are one in a thousand, that is all ! and I am glad of it from the bottom of my soul. Be that as it may, the farmer, (for such was the generous Townsend,) though a man of strong mind, and one too who had lived in the world, readily believed the lie ; for dwelling near a small town, and having, therefore, seldom occasion to visit the village where I was known, he had no means of contradicting it. He left me with many expressions of condolence ; and immediately his wife and daughter entered the apartment—to learn (as they said) what I would like for breakfast. The former had the good heart of her husband, but not his improved mind ; and the latter was a rosy-cheeked damsel of fifteen, whose animal propensities evidently took the lead of her intellectual powers.

This excellent family paid the greatest attention to me for two days : at the end of which time feeling able to depart, I expressed myself to that effect—being unwilling to trespass longer on their hospitality. Whereupon Mr. Townsend declared his intention of taking me home in his own wagon ! So—I had got into a fine dilemma through my impudence !—And how to get out again ? Though my modesty, to be sure ; aided a little by that

humane regard for the feelings of my fellow-creatures which is so natural to me;—that is to say—I resolved to take leave of the family without exposing them to the pain of bidding farewell. But my Gallantry, urged by the great esteem it had ever entertained for the aforesaid Modesty, had a mind to save it the trouble : and thus it was :—Miss Townsend and Mr. Levis chanced to find themselves together in the parlour after breakfast. Papa and mama were absent. Mr. Levis appeared pleased with Miss Townsend's person ; and Miss Townsend seemed delighted with Mr. Levis's. Of course they drew their chairs together, and commenced a flirtation. Mr. Levis's arm was around Miss Townsend's neck ; and he was saying, and she was looking, all the soft things imaginable, when suddenly—papa entered the room. He stopped short for a moment ; and turned pale ; then approaching me, laid his hands on my collar, while I trembled like a chicken in the claws of the cook. "Young man !" he said, very slowly, "you have taught me a lesson in benevolence I shall never forget,"—and he drew me to the outward door ; and then, thrusting me from him with such violence that I fell to the ground, added, "Go, sir!—I leave my revenge to your own conscience ; and may God forgive you as readily as I do !" His words made me shudder ; for passion had given him eloquence.

Directly afterward my hat and bundle threw a graceful somerset from the window ; and I went on my way, glad to have come off so easily.

CHAPTER VII.

Why, Hostess! a stool here for this gentleman.

Every Man in his Humour.

I WENT on my way, glad to have come off so easily.—But the reader must not suppose I “whistled as I went.” O, no! there was no “want of thought;” that respectable gossip was far too busy for my comfort.

I remembered what indignation had flushed my honest brow, in the days of my boyhood, when I read the story of Olivia :* and now—what had the events of the last hour taught me? That the self-same heart, which once would swell with anger at the mere name of seduction, could throb with lust for the very crime itself! It was in vain that I endeavoured to excuse my own conduct by that of the object; in vain that self-love suggested that the latter had in a manner invited me: Conscience, or rather Reason, whispered that had I succeeded the misery would have been just the same.—He who pushes his fellow from the verge of a precipice, and he who drags his struggling victim through a length of distance to a similar fate, are guilty of one crime: though if we ask, Which is the greater villain? the answer is, undoubtedly, not the man who yields to the temptation of a moment, but he who is determined to leap over every obstacle to gain his end. Just so with seduction:—The libertine who uses flattering lies, and deceitful promises, and all the other lures for woman’s weakness, is a baser wretch than he that obeys the wink of an occasion, which—alas!

* Vicar of Wakefield.

so few are able to resist. And yet is the latter not guiltless.—Beware then how you judge of others, till the lashes of your own conscience tell you how easy it is for the most honourable to slide!

It is a pity that youth has so bad a memory! Two minutes after I had made the above reflections—I forgot them all. My thoughts then took another turn, and I became doubtful whether my legs should follow them—*vide licet*, round the corner of a road which made an acute angle, most invitingly, with that wherein I was trudging. The truth is, that for the first time, since I had resumed my coat in the garret, it occurred to me that I knew not whither I was going. Here then was a point to be settled. So I sat down upon the bank of the road, and began to cogitate. The result was—that, inasmuch as I had an uncle in London, old, rich, and childless, and the very man to whom I owed my pretty name, it was my bounden duty to pay my respects to him. I sprang from the bank—But I had no money! I stopped, put the forefinger of my right hand to my lip, held it there one instant, and drew it back. I was young, active, and in good spirits,—and what is difficult to youth?—I resolved to work my way to London, (provided, of course, I could not get there in a manner more to my satisfaction). —“Now, shall I turn this corner—or not?”—said I to myself. I mused a second: the road looked tempting; a bright thought struck me:—I thrust my hand into my breeches’ pocket, and drew forth one of the half-pence, which the reader may remember was all I had before I stole—hum!—“Now,” said I, (still to myself,) “head shall be for *yes*, and tail for *no*.”—I threw up the half-penny: “Head or tail?” cried I (aloud). Down came the half-penny—and his majesty’s visage shone plainly through the dust. I took up the money, wiped it on the seat of my breeches, put it into my breeches’ pocket, grasped my bundle, and—turned the corner.

I jogged on very contentedly till two o'clock in the afternoon——

——Pray, Jeremy!—one moment—How came you to know the hour so precisely? for, supposing that you ever had a watch, your light-fingered (though heavy-fisted) friend would no doubt have made the time pass very quickly—between your pocket and his own.——

Simply by means of my stomach. As thus:—Once upon a time I happened to overhear the following conversation between two ladies: “Dear me! I wonder what time it is!” exclaimed one of them....“Quarter past one, exactly,” said her friend....“Are you sure?” rejoined the first....“Certainly!” answered the other—“for I feel *extravagantly* hungry; and I always eat something at quarter past one, exactly.”

I jogged on then, very contentedly, till two o'clock in the afternoon; when my stomach betraying strong symptoms of uneasiness, I began to lose my good humour. However, though my legs did not move so nimbly as heretofore, still they moved; and the consequence was, that just when about to drop from fatigue and hunger, I came to a little inn. Raising my eyes, mechanically, to the sign, which swung between two paintless posts directly in the middle of the road, I saw a sight that caused my mouth to water—viz. the picture of a goose lying in state upon a large dish, with a knife and fork conveniently stuck in her belly. Though the limner, with great dexterity, had painted the bird with all her feathers on—doubtless, that her character might not be mistaken—the sight was too tempting for a hungry man, and I sighed aloud. A hearty laugh at my right hand made me turn angrily round to see who made so merry at my expense, and there in the inn door stood the dispenser of good things, the landlady herself.

“Well, my pretty lad—would you like a slice of that ere goose?”

"O, as for that matter" (and I looked up at the sign again)—"I have two answers to give :—my stomach cries loudly 'Yes;' and my pocket whispers softly 'No.' "

Astonishing to relate! the lady's smiles instantly vanished; and after them vanished her person. But, just as I was beginning to curse her heartlessness, and the filthy love of lucre, she reappeared. "Can you work, my little gentleman?"...."Yes," I answered, "I will do any thing you please for a morsel to eat!" She bade me follow her, and led the way to the kitchen; and, when I had seated myself by a dirty table, set before me a bit of living cheese, and a part of a loaf of bread which seemed to have been the cat's plaything for the last month. Hungry as I was, I did not like my dinner so well but that I resolved to mend it: so——

And how think you I managed? Ah, my Reader, that is a secret worth knowing! If not one of the thousand other good things to be learned in these volumes were published, that single bit would amply compensate you for reading the whole of my history. It is indeed the true philosopher's stone :—Be where you may,—use but it, and, presto! you commute all the baser metals into gold. Now, for the particular love I bear you, you shall know my secret.

So raising my head towards the landlady, as if to thank her, I stared in her face with an expression of deep admiration; which I assumed the more easily, as she was really pretty—though no pullet. The good creature looked by no means displeased, and asked me very graciously, "Why don't you eat?"...."Eat! that's true: I was so taken up with feeding my eyes, sweet hostess, that I forgot my mouth!" She smiled—"You'll never starve for want of impudence, my lad!"—and, to make good her prophecy, produced a bit of cold meat and a loaf of fresh bread. The sight of these good things made me dry: "Ah!" said I, "if I were not so thirsty, I would thank your beauty as it deserves." A

mag of beer was added in less than a minute. "Now," said my landlady, "stuff, and drink your fill."...."Not till I have said grace, if you please,"—and springing from my seat, I threw my arms around her neck, and kissed her without hesitation. She released herself with no great disgust, and, running to the door, laughed, and said, "If I stay longer with you, you jackanapes, you'll be after doing it agin." My pious hostess evidently desired me to repeat the prayer; but, not being devoutly disposed, I quietly resumed my seat, and ate like—like any other hungry lad.

Just as I had cleared the table of every thing that could be swallowed, except the living cheese and cat's bread, the landlady returned.

"Now you've done," she said, "come with me.—What's your name?"

"Harry Johnson, ma'am."

"Come with me, Harry, and I'll show you what you've got to do.—But first let's see what sort of a lodging we can give you."

I took up my bundle, and followed my mistress pro tem. to a little cabin, which seemed to have been, originally, a closet formed by a rude partition run up (as the carpenters say) through one of the rooms; but the door had been nailed fast, and, by cutting away a portion of that side of the house, and adding a sort of shed, they had converted it into a place of deposit for the wash-tubs and other domestic utensils not in constant use. A clumsy door, with no other fastening than a wooden button, and that on the outside, opened into the yard.

After gazing round this comfortable bedchamber for some minutes, "Hum!" said my landlady, using that nasoguttural exclamation which is so fine an exemplification of the multum-in-parvo. "I think we can make this answer, heh Harry?—A little sweeping, you know—and some fresh straw—and a pair of nice clean sheets—heh!—and it'll be jist the thing! Wont it?"

Reader! do you know how to compare the adjective Bad?—I'll tell you.

It is *bad* to be poor.—Not that in the dearth of our prosperity we suffer pangs of body merely; but that then we part for ever with all we love. Shunned by our friends, deserted by our kindred, and despised by every one, existence is to us a burthen, which we still must carry, because—we dare not throw it off:—Unhappy ghosts, we wander on the shore of life, waiting the tardy hour of our passage.

It is *worse* to be poor and a gentleman—to suffer poverty, and be ashamed to show it; or (as a lady might say), and be forced to *keep up appearances*. It is the gilded scutcheon and the velvet pall—the gaudy trappings that shine without, while all within is stench and rottenness.

But *worst* of all to be obliged to prostitute our sentiments to fill our bellies; to swear that black is white, and white is black, as some fool patron lists; to stretch our necks meekly towards him, and in a piteous tone beg him to use them at his pleasure, when we would fain be using his at *our* pleasure; to play poor Schacabac with some merry Barmecide—O, this is hell itself!

“——it'll be jist the thing! wont it?” Faith! the cook might as well ask of the crab he is boiling alive, “Comfortable lodging this, neighbour crab?” What if the honest crab cry *no*!—what good will it do him? He may leap from the pot if he likes; but it is a hard choice between the coals and hot water. “Wont it?” “O, just the thing!” answered I—much against my conscience, more against my inclination—“I could not wish it a *straw* better!”....“Well then, jist hide your bundle under that tub.” I did as she bade me, and then followed her into the bar-room.

“Can you write and cipher, Harry?”

“O, quite well!”

"Well then, cast up this here sum"—showing me a greasy book scrawled over with the lamest attempts at figures and letters that I ever saw. As she turned over the pages, my hostess took occasion to lean her hot cheek against mine. "Harry," she whispered, as she ran her fingers through my hair—"You're a devilish handsome fellur!"...."Do you think so?" said I—"It must be a reflection of your beauty, then, sweet hostess. If I make so good an impression on your eyes, let me try how the seal will suit your lips." She did not leave my kiss unrequited; but returned it tenfold, and with tenfold ardour; then, pressing my hand in a manner that, upon my word, was excessively affable, abruptly left me,—“O, ho!” thought I, “Mr. Jeremy!—You are born to get along in the world, I see. Not been an hour in the house—and yet you have managed to swallow a pound of beef, a loaf of bread, a mug of beer, and your landlady’s heart in the bargain! Well done, sir! a pretty mouth you must have!”—Thus thinking, I resolved to consult a glass, which, hanging on the opposite wall in its modest frame of dark mahogany, seemed to woo my attention. Now be it known that the bar-room was a sort of hall, into the right and left sides of which opened all the *decent* rooms in the house. In passing the door of one of these decent rooms, I fancied I overheard the voice of the landlady whispering with great earnestness; and being naturally inquisitive, and, if you like, dear Reader, not over scrupulous, I applied my eye to the key-hole to reconnoitre, and saw—a scene that caused my vanity to sink below zero. I saw the very same lips, that five minutes before had so nicely inoculated with mine, pressed to the filthy tobacco-box of Ostler Tom. Yes, my Reader, there sat the pretty mistress of “The Goose” in ‘converse sweet’ with an ugly, swart-faced, chuckle-headed giant, fresh reeking from the stables. Pah! the sight made me spit with utter loathing. I wiped my mouth again and again with

the greatest diligence, and, after these ablutions, thinking it but right to indulge my ear in its turn, I applied that organ to the key-hole; whereupon I heard the mellifluous voice of Tom Ostler speaking with an energy, which I ascribed to the violence of his amorous longing.

"Looke, Mrs. Coming!" said the sentimental meadow-lark of hay and oats, "I a'n't a-go'n to be flim-flammed any longer! If you don't marry me, next Sunday—why I'll jist be after Kate Blowze agin, that's all!"

"La, Tom! you needn't speak so loud however. There's many a man would like to have your place, I can tell you that! Haven't I shared my bed and board with you, you ingrateful fellur; and the profits of The Goose too—jist as if you was my own husband? and yet you a'n't to be satisfied, till you go to church to be married by the parson!—And you needn't try to plague me about Kate Blowze—the nasty, old, wrinkled—I know you think me handsomer than her, don't you Tom?—Well! if *you* don't think me handsome, others do, that's all! I've had as pooty a man as yourself to tell me so to-day—yes, as pooty a man as yourself too—although he's but a boy!"

"Damn me, if it a'n't that jackanapes what came here jist now! Lord, if I catch him——!"

At this interesting part of the dialogue, I heard some one bawling without, "Mrs. Coming!—Tom!—Mrs. Coming!—Mrs. Coming!" and was obliged to quit my station.

The maid and mistress entered the bar-room almost at the same instant—though from different doors.

"What's the matter, Susan? Any customers come?"

"Yes, ma'm; there's a gentleman broke down jist above here on the road, and he'll be wanting the horsetler I dare say, ma'm.—Tom! Tom!"

"Tom! Tom!" echoed the mistress, as loud as she could bawl.

"Tom! Tom!" re-echoed the book-keeper, with the whole force of his lungs.

In came the gallant Tom, at the back-door, and directed all his attention to the last crier.

"What the devil you're bawlin' after, you damned baby-face you?"

"Let the boy alone!"—said his *mistress*, interposing—"it was me that called you—There's a gentleman broke down above here, Tom."

"Yes! there's a gentleman broke down above here, Tom!" added the anxious Susan.

"Yes! there's a gentleman broke down above here, Tom!" superadded the undaunted Harry.

"And I wish to God you was broke down with him!" swore the angry Thomas, as he ran out to the scene of the accident.

In a few minutes the gentleman himself entered the bar-room, carrying a trunk of the smallest kind.

"Shall I take your trunk, sir?" asked Mistress Coming.

"No—thank you!—I shall only stop till my chaise is repaired. In the mean time you may prepare me something to eat."

"Yes, sir. What would you be pleased to have, sir?—but I don't think your chaise will be mended——"

"No;"—continued Tom, who had just returned—"Your chaise, sir, 'll not be mended this four hours yet; and it's good as ten miles to the town, your honour."

His honour was evidently conscious of being deceived; but aware, no doubt, of the folly of opposing, he only smiled good-naturedly, and said—"The road must grow rapidly, my good fellow, to gain five miles in as many months. Well, well, hostess! I see I must stay to-night, whether I will or not. I will take dinner in my own apartment, if you please?"

"What will your worship choose? We have beef, and chicken, and——"

"O, any thing—any thing! It is of no importance what, provided it be nice."

"Of no importance!" quoth I to myself, "Eating of no importance!—Why, the man's a fool!" The landlady seemed to be of the same opinion; for her jaw dropped, and she exclaimed disconsolately, "La, sir! the gentleman must know what he likes best, sure!—we have cheap dinners and dear dinners—jist as the gentleman pleases." The stranger resumed his good-humoured smile—"The expense is of no importance, either, hostess; so prepare just what you think is best. Come, which is to be my room?"—Dame Coming was no longer of my opinion; her jaw rose again, and she exclaimed rather joyously, "O sir! you shall have something nice, depend upon it! This here is your worship's room—shall I carry in the gentleman's trunk, sir?"....."Thank you! I'll take it in myself."

The lady exchanged looks of astonishment with her lover, s. c. Mr. Thomas Ostler. "I'd give a shillin" to know what's in that ere trunk!" said she...."And so would I!" said he. And so saying, the knight of the curry-comb pulled up his frock, plunged his hands into the abysses of his pockets, and left the room. "Harry dear!"—said the landlady—"you'll wait on the gentleman. And do you mind, Harry—try and find what he's got in that ere trunk—that's a dear!"...."Harry dear!—Thomas dear!"—muttered I—"O, damn your dears!"—and I followed the mistress of The Goose into her best apartment, viz. the kitchen—spitting, at every step, as though I had been born under the influence of *Mercury*.

CHAPTER VIII.

King Richard III. A. I.—Sc. IV.

—PRAY, what is become of your pride, Mr. Levis? It was bad enough, methinks, to play bar-keeper in a petty inn, without stooping to the office of waiter! I ask again—what is become of your pride, friend Jeremy?—

It is not dead—as you begin to fancy, sweet Reader; nor asleep—as you more than half suspect; but it has succumbed to want—as you wholly believe. O! your Pride is a lusty fellow, till he meets with Want. You may expose him to all the sneers and jeers in the world,—he will only curl his moustache, and strut the bigger; you may kick him from Dan to Beersheba, and from Beersheba back again to Dan,—he will only look the better for the excursion; you may even clothe him in rags,—and he will wrap his filth around him with true Catonian dignity, and frown defiance to the storm:—But pinch his belly—and, O Lord! you have Signior Pride crouching and crawling, as though he'd been bred in a fishing-smack, and had never walked erect in his life! Now—had I been unwilling to “wait upon the gentleman,” I should no doubt—in spite of my landlady's *philanthropy*—have been turned out of the house that night, and been found dead in the road the next morning.

—For Heaven's sake, don't mention it! The very idea is shocking!—

O, I dare say, my loss would have grieved you: but that would not have brought me to life again. Therefore, lovely Reader—and you too, loved Reader, who have abused me for my want of pride—be contented to witness

the representation of Harry Johnson, waiter at The Goose tavern, by Jeremy Levis,—“it being his first and only appearance in that character,”—while to gratify you, in return for your condescension, the interlude shall be described with that regard to nature and that luxuriousness of explanation which so justly distinguishes the modern “Dramatic Sketches.”

The scene opens in a little apartment of The Goose tavern—a bed on one side of the room—a table, in the middle, loaded with victuals enough for a dozen men. The stranger is seen seated at the table, eating as though the occupation were more of a task to him than a pleasure. Harry Johnson standing—not behind, as is the wont of waiters, but in front of the stranger—apparently studying the latter’s countenance.

HARRY—(*aside*—which is the Latin for *internally*)—I cannot imagine, for the life of me, what makes him so attractive. His face is certainly ugly ;—the eyebrows shaggy—the eyes sunken—the nose clumsy—the mouth large and muscular—and moreover he is pitted with the small-pox. What can it be ?—O, I have it ; it is the light of pure benevolence, which plays upon his countenance—the music of a good heart, which breaks so richly from his lips.

STRANGER—(*looks up suddenly, and seems surprized at Harry’s presence*)—Young man, have you any business with me ? Pray be seated—(*shoving the table from him, and motioning Harry to a chair.*)

HARRY—Sir ?—I’m, I’m—the waiter, sir !

STRANGER—The devil you are ! You the waiter of this petty tavern ! (*eyeing him from head to foot*)—come, come, young man ! (*sternly*) I’m too old for mockery.

HARRY—(*greatly confused*)—Well, sir !—I say it—I am waiter, here—for the present.

STRANGER—For the present !—This is strange.—Pray, how long have you been in this employment ?

HARRY—For—for an hour, sir—that is, I mean—

STRANGER—For an hour !—There's something wrong in this !——Young man—(*pausing, and looking steadily at him for a moment*) I may seem inquisitive ; I have a right to be so :—Your dress, your person, your voice, is that of a gentleman ; and yet you would proclaim yourself a common menial ! and in such a hole as this !—(*again pausing, and resuming his steady gaze.*)

You seem disconcerted, sir. Come, come ! unburthen yourself—speak to me as you would to a father ! I am not wont to meddle with what does not concern me ; and when I offer my services—in case you prove yourself worthy of them—my heart goes with my words, and my hand is ready to back my heart.

HARRY—(*hesitates at first—then, as if some hope had suddenly presented itself, speaks abruptly*)—Your suspicions are just, sir ! I am not what I seem—I have assumed this character to save myself from starving.

[Here the personation of Harry Johnson having terminated, Jeremy Levis resumes the narrative in his own character.]

My explanation had an effect very different from what I expected ; for he to whom it was addressed immediately rose from his chair, his eyes flashing anger, “ Look ye sir ! think not to make me the dupe of so bare-faced a falsehood ! ” ’Twill be the worse for yourself, if you deceive me.” You may be sure I felt too indignant for reply : therefore, endeavouring to assume a look expressive of my feelings, I bowed coldly and turned to quit the room. But just as I laid my hand upon the lock, the gentleman laid *his* upon my shoulder. “ Stay ! ” said he, in the sweetest tone of his very sweet voice—“ I may

have wronged you ;—and I would fain be convinced I have.” He led me back to a seat.

—Ha, Mr. Levis ! where was *then* your spirit ?—

O, dear Reader ! had he been any other man, I should have knocked him down—with this proviso, that he was not too big for so decisive an answer ; or, preserving unbroken the ice of my dignity, I should have pushed him aside with my left hand—opened the door with my right—raised a perpendicular with my body—and left him under the mortifying impression that he had probably insulted some great man, (or some great man’s son,) in disguise. But there was that little wily devil, Self-Interest, beating on the drum of my ear to a most spirit-soothing tune :—*And when I offer my services, my heart goes with my words, and my hand is ready to back my heart.* Heigho ! music hath such charms !

When we were seated, he thus addressed me :—“ You may ask, why I take such interest in a mere stranger : I cannot answer you.—It is enough that I do take such interest. I would fain know your history, young man.—But beware how you take advantage of what I have said to deceive me ! It will be your own loss—mind me, sir !”

I required scarcely a minute to arrange my thoughts. I told him :—that I was the only son of the Reverend Ichabod Levis—that, having finished the course of education which my father was able to afford, he was minded to send me to London, where he had a rich brother, to see what the latter could do for me—that a schoolmate of mine, about to set out for the same city, had proposed that we should walk together to the first stage town—that my father, who had intended I should ride, had reluctantly consented—that I and my schoolmate had set off together—that, on the road, the latter had robbed me of my purse, leaving me too severely bruised to pursue him—that a farmer, finding me in that condition, had generously taken care of me for three days ; at the end of which time, being unwilling to trespass further on his

goodness, I had continued my journey on foot ; but being overtaken by hunger, I had consented to work at the inn for my meals—and finally, that my purpose was to work my way to London.

Had my story contained less of truth, or—if you like—more of falsehood, I should have quailed beneath the stranger's scrutinizing gaze : as it was, I met his eyes with praiseworthy steadiness. Thank Heaven ! merit does not always go unrewarded :—the benevolent gentleman grasping my hand said, with a warmth of manner that would have cheered my heart in the middle of February, "I am satisfied, my young friend—perfectly satisfied : nay, more—I once knew your father ; and for his sake, as well as your own, I am ready to assist you. To-morrow I set out for London ; and as I have no servant with me, there is a vacant seat in my chaise which you shall occupy. I will take you to your uncle's ; and, in case your conduct is such as pleases me, you shall have no reason to consider this day the most unlucky in your life ; for I am rich, and have extensive mercantile influence ; and should you feel so disposed—However, we will settle that afterwards ; as your father and uncle must first be consulted."

Reader ! meanly as I know you think of him, who is spending his time, and ink, and pens, and paper, solely for your instruction—believe me, the feelings excited by the stranger's benevolence struggled vainly for utterance :—just as you may see a herd of pigs about to be released from the pen—There they are, head and tail, all crowded in the outlet ! squeaking, and kicking, and jamming,—each clamorous porker obstructing his own passage by his noble efforts to take the lead of the others.—I say, I could not speak : but, springing from my chair, I seized one of my patron's hands in both of mine, and shook it with an earnestness that made him wince. Just at this moment he started back with an exclamation of mingled anger and surprise ; when, naturally raising my head, I

perceived the discreet mistress of the mansion standing in the half-open entrance, holding the door ajar with one hand, and poising her body with the other, as she leaned forward, with head askance and mouth wide open, ready to catch the “*ἔσα κτερόσυρα*” ere they were out of hearing—and I dare be sworn not one of them flew fast enough to escape her.

“What do you want, woman?” asked my patron, in a tone of voice which my sense of hearing could hardly convince me issued from *his* lips. Though doubtless an old offender, the lady’s delicacy was so shocked at being detected stooping, that she remained in statu-quo for a full minute. “I thought the gentleman called, sir”—she at length articulated, dropping a low courtesy. “O, you did, did you, woman!” exclaimed the gentleman sneeringly—“I advise you not to carry your politeness so far, in future, as to wait to speak till you are spoken to, but to let us know of your presence at once. You may leave us.” Dame Coming was gladly availing herself of this gracious permission—“Stop a moment! this young gentleman is now under my protection, and I expect you to treat him with as much respect as you would show to me.”.....“But,” said the cautious lady, “who is to ——?” “Psha! leave that to me.—Begone!”

When the hostess had quitted us, the benevolent stranger began to sound my principles; and I was lucky enough to please him in the main; though, in spite of all my art, a remark would here and there escape me that evidently made no favourable impression. He then amused me with anecdotes of his own boyhood; and I believe he would have fought “upon that theme” till midnight, had not the landlady interrupted him by bringing in candles. He rose. “Well, my young friend, what say you to a walk in the dark? it will give us an appetite for supper.” Certainly, it was very inconsiderate in my patron to propose a walk to one who had been walking all the morning. However, there was a balm in the name of supper that made

me forget my fatigue directly. I rose to follow him. "Have a supper for us by nine o'clock, if you please, hostess." The lady readily promised, and we left the apartment.

When we returned we found the supper ready, though a very different one from what I expected—to wit:—some slices of cold ham, and a solitary chicken, also cold, which looked as though it had had the pip since its roasting. "The devil!" exclaimed my patron, "when I had no one to dine with but myself, our hostess furnished enough for a dozen—and now, look at our supper—'Mutata est in avem!'—Well! I suppose the good lady has exhausted her larder." I was too much disappointed to jest on so serious a subject; and yet philosopher enough not to neglect the present because I could not better it—so down I sat.

"Blessed be the man," said Sancho, "who invented sleep!" Blessed be the man, say I, who invented eating! Peace to your digestive organs, dear Reader! had you seen how lightly the legs of that cold pipped chicken leaped down my throat,—and how swiftly the wings flew after them,—and with what precipitation the other parts (soft parts, understand me,) prepared to follow, even to the grave of my stomach, those members which had been their supporters in life, their allies in death, and their fellow sufferers on the spit,—had you seen, I say, how nicely I cleaned the skeleton of the aforesaid solitary fowl, you would have been cured of dyspepsia for the rest of your life: I was about to attack the ham, when a loud good-humoured laugh reminded me that I had a companion. I began to stammer forth some foolish excuse for my rudeness. "Don't stop to make apologies, my young friend; but thank your stars that I have no appetite to contend with you. Come, come,—no ceremony, I pray you! we will have some wine to favour your deglutition." Whether Mistress Coming had been listening or not at the key-hole, I am unable to say; but the door instantly opened

and gave entrance to her pretty person. "Ah, my pretty dame—you are come in the very nick of time; we were about to call for a bottle of your best wine."....."Yes, sir, I know you was——"....."What's that?" asked the stranger, while a smile, arch yet pleasant, traced its curved line round his lips—as you may see the summer's breeze skim over the surface of a lake—"I hope you've not been dancing attendance, again?" The lady could not have understood him, or she would certainly have blushed. "O, I thought as how the gentleman would be wanting some wine, and so I was jist comin' in to see about it."

She was gone so long, that my patron, good-natured as he was, began to wax impatient. "Why what, in the name of dullness, can the woman be about! I hope she is not making the wine—though, as for that," added he, "I might have known there was none ready-made in the house.———So! what has kept you so long, good woman? were the grapes unripe?"

"O, sir! I was lookin' for a bottle of the old wine which my husband, rest his bones, put away for his best customers. 'Ah, it's a true cordial!'—the good soul used to say, 'neck-tar fit enough for the Jew Peter himself.' There it is, gentlemen!" as she slowly drew a bottle from her apron, and set it on the table with much affected reverence—"a real cordial! I can smell it through the cork—Ah!"

"So can I, hostess; it smells confoundedly of sealing-wax——Ah! You're not expert at lighting candles, my pretty woman?"

"What does the gentleman mean, sir?"

"O, only that you might have been quicker in melting your wax! we are not at all particular as to having our wine sealed, I assure you."

"Why, I hope you don't respect me, sir, of givin' you new wine for old! I would scorn——!"

“Bring me the cork-screw ! I believe I’ll draw the cork myself, as I see you’ve been careful enough to wipe off the cobwebs, and other stuff of weaver Time, lest I should soil my fingers. Be quick however ; for you know—if you put old wine into new bottles——”

The landlady left the room before he could finish the sentence ; and presently returned, with the article in request. He drew the cork, which looked by no means musty,—poured out some wine—and tasted it.

“How much more have you left of this cordial, good hostess ? Ah !” (smacking his lips) “ ‘ a real cordial ! ’ ”

“That ere’s the only bottle what was left, sir.”

“A great pity ! I was going to recommend you to send it all to the Jew Peter, since it suits his taste so well :—’tis much too good for Christians.”

The mistress of The Goose coloured violently, and asked, with a slight tremor in her voice :—

“Why, why, sir ? what’s the matter with it ?”

“O, nothing—nothing at all ! only you had too little time to rinse the bottle : it smacks somewhat of hops. I ask pardon for supposing you otherwise detained.”

The lady coloured still more violently than before ; and then turned deadly pale ; while her whole frame trembled—with passion, as I then thought. My patron seemed aware that he had carried his pleasantry too far, and discontinued it at once.

“Why, my good woman—I am sorry I have hurt your feelings.—Come, come ! your wine is very good ; and you shall bring me another bottle to pay for my joke. I dare say you can find another in some dark corner—*heh !*”

The good woman’s looks brightened instantly. “No—there’s not a drop more of it, I assure you—not as much as you could put in your eye, if you was to offer twenty guineas for it !—I thought as how the gentleman would like it ; for every one what tasted it—and that isn’t many neither—liked that little bitterish taste ; it’s what makes it

taste so like a cordial, sir, as my husband said—rest his bones.”

“Well, you shall taste some yourself, fair hostess, for your husband’s sake,”—and he poured out a glass for her. She drew back rather hastily—

“No, no! not for the world!—I’d rather not, thank your worship—La! I’m sure I wouldn’t think of such a thing, sir!”—and, so saying, she ran out of the room.

“Truly,” exclaimed my patron, laughing, “our hostess is an exceedingly modest woman, in spite of her prettiness!—though I could have excused her *cordial* from being infected with a like virtue. However,” he added, pushing the bottle towards me, “I can promise as much as Horace—‘Vile potabis Sabinum.’”

Who will say that virtue has not its reward in this life? Is not the self-satisfaction it imparts a sufficient recompense—a more than sufficient recompense—for all the privation and suffering, which must be the lot of him who practises it? for all the misconstructions, and sneers, and revilings, to which he is exposed? The stranger had done an act of benevolence; he conceived, no doubt, that he was about to rescue a fellow-creature from vice and probable misery; and his self-content displayed itself in the gaiety of heart, which prompted him to relax the dignity of his maturer years in the pleasantry—the jokes and laughter of boyhood.—But the bottle is before me!—

Though no connoisseur of wines, I could scarcely swallow a mouthful of Mistress Coming’s *choice*; for, besides being execrably thin, it tasted, as my patron had said, as though it had been kept in an unwashed porter-bottle. But, bad as it was, he contrived to admit three glasses of it within the time of—an hour, perhaps. At the end of that time, he began to grow drowsy.—Come, Mr. Jeremy—said I to myself—‘Edisit satis, atque bibisti;’ and your patron is sleepy; ‘Tempus abire tibi est’—and I prepared to retire. He roused himself a

little, and took my hand:—"Good night, my young friend. I shall start early to-morrow morning; so remember to be in readiness." I pressed his hand warmly, wished him a good night, and left the room.

At the bar, where I stopped for a candle, I met the landlady. She grasped my arm more eagerly than I thought was necessary—asking, with great quickness, "How does the gentleman, Harry?—I mean, does he want any thing?" Though by no means pleased with the familiarity of her address (for she should have remembered that I had changed characters since dinner, and was now to be treated "with the same respect" as her other guest), I answered her:—that she had better clear away the supper table, as he was sleepy, and would like to retire. She started.... "Has he drank his wine, heh?"

—Whom the devil are you speaking to?—said I, (without opening my lips)—O ho, Mrs. Coming! I will let you see that Mr. Jeremy Levis is not so civil a young man as Harry Johnson, and is not to be detained by such foolish questions!—"Yes!" I drawled (stretching my jaws,) "and much to my surprise."—And, taking a light that stood ready, I strode off to my bed with all the dignity of an insulted gander.

Ah, my Reader! an old servant of my grandmother's had but one watchword for all challenges. It was:—"Circumstances alters cases!"

I was justly entitled to a better bed than that I was to occupy, and my landlady should certainly have provided me a better; but I had taken such a liking to the benevolent stranger, that I had been glad to be near him, even in a worse lodging than a tub-house.—The reader will understand by this that my patron's apartment was the room I have mentioned as originally containing my bed-chamber.—

I stretched my limbs upon my *rural* couch, and, using my bundle as a pillow, endeavoured to make a bargain with sleep. But, deuce take that perverse deity! he is too much like a woman for comfort. Court him, and he coyly flies you—to enhance the value of his favours; but show yourself indifferent, and O—you have Mr. Somnus ready enough in all conscience!

Shall I be honest?—I will!—for I see you, Reader, as you are now sitting, cross-legged—your right hand holding a suspiciously-bound book, intituled “Sixty Years of the Life of Jeremy Levis”—the forefinger of said hand shut in by its leaves, and, I dare be sworn, at this very passage—your gentle features wearing an expression which may be thus translated:—“What a question! speak the truth, and shame the devil, sir, by all means.” Well, then! it was Sleep that endeavoured to make a bargain with me, and not I with Sleep. Nay—I did my best to keep him off; and, had he struggled, I would rather have leaped from the bed than have yielded. And who would have slept, when he had thoughts so pleasant to serenade him? I “fought my battles o’er again;”—I began at the farmer’s house, where I had been so basely requited for doing my utmost to please the daughter; then I stopped a while on Mrs. Coming’s neck; and, flitting off, for fear of being cloyed with sweets, lighted by the side of the friendly stranger. There I found every thing to suit me; and having hewn the stones, and gathered the mortar and other necessities for building. I set to work; and, had not the materials fallen short, I verily believe my castle would have reached to the seventh heaven,—for the warmth of my imagination was so great, that the bricks were baked and the lime was slacked, with a despatch that would have satisfied Pharaoh himself. But, even as it was, the pile was a noble one. In the first story, I was clerk in a mercantile house of the highest reputation; in the second, I was an eminent banker, sweating under a press of business; in

the third, I was laying up bags of guineas—merely to have them out of the way ; in the fourth, I was caressing a wife with all the bloom of Hebe, all the beauty of Venus, all the wisdom of Minerva, and more than the chastity of Diana ; in the fifth, I had begotten a brood of children—in eyes like their mother, in noses like their father, and in hair like cherubs ; and in the sixth—I sprang from my straw, pushed open the door of my cabin, and was about to step into the yard, when I heard the sound of feet—as of persons approaching.

Though the moon was risen, yet the side of the house where I stood was thrown completely into shadow inasmuch as it faced the west. Thus favoured, I softly drew the door a-jar, and waited their approach. Presently I could perceive two indistinct objects moving within a yard's distance from the wall. These I at once conjectured to be no other than the lovers—and very sagaciously too. "I tell you, it is too soon"—said the voice of my landlady, so faintly that unless I had been blessed with feline ears I could never have distinguished the words ;—"Susan has but jist gone to bed ; and the boy mayent be asleep."....."Damn Susan, and the boy too !" growled the watch-dog throat of Thomas Ostler ; "I tell you, if we're goin' to do't at all, we may as well do't first as last." What further passed between the parties I could not overhear, although I played wry-neck for at least five minutes.—Well, well !—thought I, as I gently drew to the door and tumbled myself upon my *litter*—I don't know what business it is of mine ; I can't see what I've to do with their beastly assignations.—And I drew the sleeve, or tail, of my shirt—I don't precisely recollect which—across my lips, with an involuntary shudder at the remembrance of my late connection with such a community of goods.

It may have been half an hour afterwards, and just as my eyelids began to grow heavy with drowsiness, that the cabin where I lay became suddenly illuminated ; when,

turning my head, I found the light to issue from my patron's room, through the cracks of the badly-joined partition which separated us. Curious as I was, I should have shrunk from any intrusion on his privacy ; but, being aware that he had put out his light nearly an hour before, I felt myself justifiable in the inquiry I was about to make. So, rising as softly as possible, I crept close to the partition, and applying my eye to the largest crevice, saw——O, dear Reader ! I saw my patron struggling in the murderous grasp of the ostler. I saw the giant press his knees upon the stomach, and his left hand on the mouth, and with his right hand clasp the throat of the stranger. I saw it all ; for I felt rooted to the spot. I could not stir hand or foot, nor turn aside my eyes ; my blood rushed with maddening impetuosity through my veins, as though a thousand floodgates were unloosed ; and then my heart beat frightfully, as though it would burst its confinement—but only for a few seconds—and then lay almost still ; and my whole frame became cold and damp ; but it did not tremble,—it was too stiffened for that : my fingers felt hard and shrivelled, like a dead man's ; and my breath came gaspingly, at long intervals ; and my mouth stood partly open, and parched as with intensest thirst ; and my eyes were dilated as though they never might be closed again. I felt all this—I saw all this—I was aware of the slightest circumstance ; for, though my body was impotent, my mind was painfully acute,—just as you may have felt in some frightful dream, where you know what you should do, you struggle so to do, but some unseen power seems to choke your voice, and bind your arms and limbs, determined so you shall not do.

At the head of the bed, where lay my patron, stood the hostess—seeming, like myself, fixed by the fascination of horror. She stood a living statue ;—her cheeks were marble ; her lips were marble,—and open like to mine ; but not like mine her eyes,—they wandered not, but stared glasslike and swollen on the writhing and

blackened features of her guest ; while her right hand lay upon the stranger's forehead, as if she would hold it down,—yet it lay but lightly ; and the fingers of her left hand touched his naked shoulder. The visage of the murderer—I saw it too ; but not like that of his accomplice :—There was no horror there, but a resolution wrought up to frenzy. The swollen veins upon his forehead looked like cords ; his shaggy black brows were knitted close, concealing the eyes ; his lips firmly closed, and turned in upon the teeth ; whilst every muscle of his face that was in action stood forth frightfully distinct. He had no coat ; and the right sleeve of his shirt, tucked up—perhaps not purposely—like that of a butcher, displayed his powerful arm exerted to its utmost. I saw all this—I saw it at a glance ; and more—the quivering of the limbs beneath the sheet that hid them,—the struggling of the hands within the grasp of the murderer,—the heaving of the chest,—the changing hue of the countenance—how it reddened, and then became purple, and then grew darker still : I saw the eyeballs straining from their sockets ; and the black blood gush from the nostrils, as the wretch relaxed his hold. I saw it all—all, without moving limb, without uttering sound, without closing eyelid—I saw it all—yet, God knows how—I lived.

When all was over, the murderer left the body without taking his eyes from it, and, addressing himself rather than his accomplice, said in a whisper—so horribly distinct, that the former stillness was soothing in comparison, with it, “He’s dead !” The woman made no answer. He started, and laid his hand upon her arm, and added, in the same awful tone, “Don’t sleep here, like a fool !—he’s dead !” I could even hear him lower his whisper at the two last words ! The woman drew her hands from the body with a shudder, and, first looking all around her, with a startled air, drew close to her paramour—while her whole frame seemed to shrink into a smaller mass.—“Is it all over, Tom ?—all ?”

My trance (if so it may be called) had been broken with the first words that were uttered, and now—as is always the case when respiration is suddenly restored to its full vigour—I fetched my breath with a gasp. The effect was instantaneous. The ostler started, looked around him, and grasping the arm of his partner, as though he would crush it, said in his lowest tone—but I heard it well—“Did you hear any thing?”..... “Yes! what was it?”.....He paused a moment, and again looked round him. A thought seemed to strike him—“The boy!” I durst look no longer. The light wavered—flashed—and disappeared in an instant. My chance was now to be thrown for life or death.

Softly I laid myself upon the straw; and with that singular presence of mind, which is often remarkable at the very moment when our powers of body have almost all deserted us, resolved to counterfeit a sleep. Scarcely had I disposed myself on my side, when the door opened and the murderers entered. Though my eyes were apparently closed, I could see, from between the edges of their lids, the ostler approach me on tiptoe (—both himself and the hostess were barefooted—,) with the lantern in his left hand. He knelt down by the bed, and I was forced to close my eyes; but I felt that he passed the light repeatedly before them. My breathing became violent. He turned his body half round, and whispered to his accomplice, “He breathes hard; he must be awake.” I ventured to look again. The hostess had grasped the villain’s arm, and her face was wild with horror. “No more murder! for the love of God!” she exclaimed in a tone as low as his—yet very different. The ostler sprang from the floor with a violence that would have roused me, had I been sleeping. “Hell, woman! are you such a fool,” he muttered between his teeth, “as to thrust your neck into a halter, when you needn’t to? It’s too late now to be squeamish,” he added, with a devilish sneer; “you

should have thought of it afore." Then inclining his head towards her, he said, slowly and emphatically—"He can't be for tellin' tales of us when his tongue wont wag!" My agitation was excessive. To conceal it I moved my arm over my face, with the impatient gesture of one whose sleep is disturbed by insects, turned upon my back, and muttered as if dreaming. The wretched woman noticed it. "There! see! the boy's asleep, and dreaming! He hasn't heard us, Tom; I'm sure he has'nt!" And she drew the reluctant villain from the cabin.

My limbs trembled as with an ague fit, a cold-sweat broke out from every pore of my body, and my respiration was fearfully violent. It seemed as though a heavy weight had been taken from my breast.——Reader! have you ever suffered under a nightmare? Well, your feelings, at the moment when you threw off your phantom, were the counterpart of mine at the disappearance of my reality.

Not two minutes after the murderers had left me the light again flashed through the crevices. I durst not look this time; but I listened: and my breathing again became partly suspended, as I supported myself on my elbow, and stretched my neck to catch the faintest sound. There was first the slight creaking of a bed,—and then the tread of feet, as of persons bearing some heavy body,—and then the light wavered—and disappeared—and all again was hushed.

I flung myself back upon the straw, tortured by feelings I would not know again for worlds. Before, I had been stupified with horror, and to such a degree as to be deprived of even the *idea* of aiding my benefactor; but now, I was distracted with fear—pure, bodily fear. As I tossed from side to side, starting every minute as I fancied I heard the returning steps of the murderers, and straining my eyes in the darkness in expectation of seeing them re-enter, I recollected that the unfortunate stranger

had mentioned, during our walk, that the town through which he purposed passing in the morning was but five or seven miles distant in a direct line from the inn. This recollection was to me as the rain to the withered grass ; I forgot my fears in the hope of bringing to justice the murderers of my poor patron.

Again I listened :—*the stillness of death* was around me. I arose—I dressed myself—I opened the door. The moon was shining brightly. My purpose was hazardous. Should the wretches be stirring, and discover my flight before I was beyond their reach, the chance were but equal for life or death. But it would not be equal if I kept my bed.—I no longer hesitated, but fled with the feet of Hippomenes ; for, though the ostler was no Atalanta, the penalty of failure stood all the same :—

Mors pretium tardis. Ea lex certaminis esto.

CHAPTER IX.

Vos O ! quibus integer evi
Sanguis, ait, solidæque suo stant robore vires ;
Vos agitate fugam.

VIRG.—ÆN.

One while the little footpage went,
And another while he ran ;
Until he came to his journey's end,
The little footpage never blan.

The Rising in the North.

I REACHED the town without any other interruption than an occasional palpitation of the heart, as I heard the pursuing steps of—nothing at all. No living thing was stirring, save a melancholy cat in the kennel, whose well-licked mistress had probably regaled herself, and some more favoured lover, with his caterwauling, while he, poor

wretch, thinking his piping pleased her, had piped on,—*liquidas gutture voces ingeminans*,—till he found his mistake. What was I to do? I reflected a minute, and came to the resolution of knocking at a very respectable house which stood at the left hand. I proceeded accordingly. Presently a window opened, and something, which I could distinguish as a human figure dressed in white, leaned forward to reconnoitre. “Hullo, there!” it bawled, in none of the most amiable of voices, “What do you want?” I knew not what to answer, so continued to thump upon the door. “Hullo, I say! What the devil do you want at this time o’night?” I now found my speech.

“O, sir!—a gentleman has been murdered!”

“Murdered! What? where?”

“O, come down, sir, for the love of God! and I’ll tell you all!”

“Murdered!” repeated the voice, somewhat softened,—“that’s interesting!”—and the head popped in again, and down fell the window.

In a few minutes the bolts were withdrawn, and the door was unclosed to the extent of half-a-foot; when, in the opening thus made, appeared a night-capped head—the body to which it belonged being ensconced behind the door—and an arm holding a lighted candle. The head scrutinized me for about a second; when, the examination proving satisfactory, it rejoined the body behind the door, the arm and candle followed, and the same voice that had spoken from the window bade me “Come in.” I obeyed, with some difficulty (for the cautious landlord chose not to widen the entrance), and the door was instantly closed, and the bolts were restored. We faced each other for the benefit of mutual inspection. He was just such a man as you may see any day—short, broad-shouldered, and harsh-featured,—with nothing remarkable, save a pair of shrewd little black eyes, which kept waltzing about in their sockets in the most whimsical manner, and a snub nose, whose tip

rivalled in brilliancy the flame of the candle, as it surpassed in redness the burning wick. As for me—though thought unworthy of a second glance, I was desired, with a prudence that marked the man a model for housekeepers, to keep before him; while throwing open a door at our right hand, he motioned me to enter.

When we were seated, I told him all I had witnessed at the inn, naming myself simply as a lodger there. He mused a moment, uttered an emphatic “Hum!” eyed me sharply, and, depressing his head, muttered to himself “A most shocking occurrence indeed! It will tell well—capitally well! run like wild-fire!” Then moving his chair close to mine, he laid his hand upon my shoulder with the most condescending familiarity, put his face into labour-pains for a smile, which after all came forth a monster, and said in a voice which he probably meant for insinuating,—

“Don’t tell it to any one else, I beg of you; or the Herald ’ll get it; and that ’ll spoil the sale of *my* paper, you know. Oblige me—I’m extremely honoured, I assure you, by your selection.”

I had waited with patience till the man was ready to hear me, and had observed with calm surprise the singular manner in which he received my narration; but when I found that he had listened to me, only with a view to his own dirty traffic, I could hold no longer.—I sprang from my chair.—

“My God!” I exclaimed, “do you think I am come here at this hour merely to furnish matter for your paper? I have knocked at your door, sir, as I would at any other man’s, with the hope of being directed to the proper authority for securing the murderers.”

He was by no means disconcerted; but, gently reseating me, said, in the mildest voice he could assume,—

“Well, sir, you could’nt have addressed yourself to a fitter person. I’m the particular friend of Justice Even, and will take you to his house myself.”

“Let us go then immediately, for the love of Heaven!

"And so we will:—but, sir, suppose you first favour me with a repetition of your story—if it isn't too much trouble."

"Damnation! how can you trifle so, sir? The murderers will escape before we start!"

"But consider, sir," resumed the incorrigible printer, "I shall have so fine a triumph over the Herald! I would'nt lose the chance for a hundred pounds. Pray be seated: it wont keep us a minute; and you can run over the detail as fast as you please. Now you must oblige me."

So saying, he flew to a writing desk which stood in a corner of the room, drew forth a bit of paper and a pencil, and seated himself very leisurely to take notes. I saw there was nothing to be gained by opposing him; so began, with as good a grace as I could, to relate the horrid tale anew. When I had finished, he snapped his fingers, and leaped from his chair in an ecstasy.

"Ah, it's just the thing! never was so fortunate in my life!"—and he began to read over his notes with great rapidity of utterance—"Shocking occurrence! It has become our painful duty to record—hum!—a crack in the partition—knees in the belly—hands on the throat—woman at the head—kicking and writhing—brains dashed out—head and limbs cut off and carried out in a bag—Hum!—set fire to the straw—trip up the murderer—and run away in the smoke. Never was any thing better! I'm infinitely obliged to you, sir—shall be happy to furnish you with a paper gratis."

"But, my dear sir, you need not have added those horrid particulars. He was merely ——"

"Ah, excuse me, my good friend!" said the printer, interrupting me without the least ceremony, and folding his memoranda with the utmost coolness, "it is none the worse for a little embellishment: 'twill take better—infinitely better! Now wait a minute, till I slip on my coat, and we'll rouse the justice in the turning of a rounce."

He left the room with the light, after taking the precaution to remove the keys of the sideboard. During the short time he was absent, I thought I overheard the sound of voices in high argument : but, before I could determine to whom they belonged, he returned. His face was heated, and the tip of his nose looked redder than before.

"Come, let us begone," he said, in a low quick voice, whilst he drew me to the door,—“for my wife is so afraid to sleep alone ——” he stopped to withdraw the bolts and did not finish the sentence.

"Mr. Quoins! Mr. Quoins!" screamed a female voice, just as we were stepping into the street, "you're not agoin' to leave me alone? I shall be robbed! and murdered! and ravished!"

"And I wish to God you were all three!" muttered the uxorious Mr. Quoins, as he slammed the door after him; "it might stop your bawling." And the prudent husband locked his wife in, and dropped the key into his pocket.

It was no great distance to Justice Even's. When we arrived there, my companion, to show his intimacy with the squire, fell to knocking as though he would bring the house about his ears. For some time it was to no purpose.

"Curse on the impudent rascals!" swore Mr. Quoins, "if their master knew it was me, he'd rouse them pretty quick, I warrant you!"—and he knocked still louder than before. Presently a window opened.—“Who's there?” drawled a voice equally melodious with his own.

"Why Thomas, my good friend! is that you? You shouldn't keep one waiting so. I want to see your master on particular business—very particular business, Thomas."

"My master isn't used for to wake on preticular business," growled the porter;—"you can come at a more seasonerbler hour for honest folks; or"—mimicking the

insinuating tone of my companion—"you can wait here till he gits up, Mr. Quoins."

It was high time for me to put in my word.

"Stay, my friend! you must wake your master instantly. A horrid murder has been committed, and the murderers will escape if they——"

"Lord save us! a murder? I'll do your message on the spot, sir! I was thinkin' it was some of Mr. Quoins's nonsense."

The window was shut down.

"Curse his impudence!" said the offended printer—"But I tell Even he'll ruin all his servants if he indulges 'em so." Then turning to me, he added, "How could you be so thoughtless, my dear sir, as to tell that rascal about the murder? It'll be all about the town now; and the Herald 'll get hold of it; and that 'll spoil the sale you know:—not that I care a type's worth about it—not I! for, thank God! the Mercury has as good a circulation as the Herald any day:—but then you know there's nothing like having a thing all to one's self—besides you know——"

I was heartily tired of the fellow's loquacity, and thought to get rid of him by waking his fears.

"But Mr. Quoins—are you not afraid to leave your house unprotected? I can do without your further assistance I think: though I am much obliged to your kindness." He was not to be shaken off so easily.

"Not at all obliged to me I assure you sir. My wife can guard my house very well; and—egad! I can guard *her* very well, ha, ha, ha!" (patting the pocket which held his key). "She's only to bar the door on the inside; and all's safe, I warrant you, on the outside."

I tried again.

"Gracious heaven!" I exclaimed, affecting surprise, "you surely have not locked your wife in, have you, Mr. Quoins? Suppose the house should take fire in your absence—she'd be burnt up, with all your children!"

"Thank God! I have no children; and my house is insured," answered the philosophic Quoins; and as he spoke the door opened. A light in the entry showed a gray-headed domestic holding the door ajar. "His worship begs you'll walk in, sir: he'll be down instantly." I entered. "O Lord, O Lord! you've broken my nose!" screamed my companion, clapping his hand to his face. The waggish old man only mocked him:—"I didn't know you was comin' in, Mr. Quoins:"—and, tittering, he led the way to a room. I was wicked enough to relish the joke. "Is your nose insured too, Mr. Quoins?"—I may thank the Herald, that I was not knocked down.

The justice did not keep us waiting. He was a man of about sixty, and in every respect the reverse of Mr. Quoins;—that is to say—he was as much a gentleman as Quoins was a blackguard. My companion's bow he returned with coldness, and mine with affability. (The reason is plain—Quoins he knew; but me he did not know),—and turning his back upon the former, addressed his conversation to me.

"You are come upon a melancholy business, young gentleman." I answered by relating the scene at the tavern precisely as I had told it to the printer.—I have seen many a justice of the peace——Why do you laugh Reader?——I have seen many a justice of the peace, I say; but none with the feeling of Archibald Even, Esquire. He could not muster words for some minutes.

"A horrid affair, sir!—There is one thing we have yet to do: and we must set about it immediately. Thomas!—Here, Thomas: call up the coachman, and bid him get ready the carriage; and do you go over to Kite's, and tell him to come here instantly—and bring his brother with him—and let them both come armed—and you may go ask for the coroner. And remember, Thomas, I rely upon your prudence:—you can be silent when you will." The old man left the room proud of the trust reposed in him.

"I'm much obliged to your worship for that direction" said Mr. Quoins, who had hitherto sat very still; "I wouldn't have the thing get wind for a great deal. And now I know how your worship's going to proceed in the business," he added, rising, "I'll go and set my boys to work immediately.—Good night—or rather, good morning, your worship. Good morning, my young sir."

"I am very sorry you have let that fellow know of this matter," said the justice, when the printer had quitted us. "He will publish some distorted account of it; and the whole town will be in a ferment." In justification of my being found in such company, I thought proper to give a history of my acquaintance with Editor Quoins; and—as I have ever remarked that people of warm feelings are as ready to laugh as cry—his worship seemed to relish it mightily.

"Well! that Quoins is a strange fellow. With all his conceit and folly, he is as cunning as his eye would mark him to be. He was once the editor of our sole journal; but, of late, he has had a rival in a new paper, which being better conducted than his own has of course a more extensive circulation—and that worries Quoins:—He is become jealous; and meaner than ever." Here the justice looked at his watch—"It is now half past two—I must leave you by yourself for a quarter of an hour or so; but I will not leave you in the dark as Mr. Quoins did. The carriage will probably be ready by the time I return."

It was nearly three o'clock when we started on our melancholy duty. The coroner sat with the justice and myself, and the constables occupied the box with the driver. On the way, the first named personage—one of your dull, sleepy, happy sort of people, that can enjoy a nap either in carriage or couch, as well on their bottoms as their backs—conceived it would be saving time to solder, where he was, the broken parts of his night's rest, and, thus unrestrained by his presence, I gave Mr. Even

an account of my obligations to the stranger whose misfortune had now brought us together. The good man was sensibly agitated.

"Indeed," he said, "I do not wonder that your feelings made you impotent to aid him ; for, though Time has dulled in me the keener sense of youth, and a life of great vicissitude has rendered me familiar with horrors, had I been in your place I should have felt the same.—— What was the person of this unfortunate gentleman ?" I described it. "It is indeed as I thought !—Poor A—— !——He was, sir, an unmarried gentleman who sometimes visited me, when he passed through our town ; and, though we never were intimate, I knew him well, and esteemed him accordingly.——He was possessed of extensive real estate, and his affairs often called him to the capital. It was probably on such an occasion that he met his fate, poor fellow !—Ah, my young companion ! you have reason for sorrow ; you have lost one whose friendship might have been, perhaps your surest gain, and certainly your greatest honour.——Alas !"——added the worthy Justice, with a sigh—"It is ever thus with Death ! He plucks the fairest and the soundest, and leaves the worm-gnawed blossom and the faded bud—the mildewed ear and the gnarled apple—to hang their useless weight upon the stem, till they fall from very rottenness, or Autumn sweeps them to the earth to be trampled on—uncared for !"

I am not callous by nature, nor yet am I by usage of the world. I am of that volatile temperament, which flutters from sunshine to shade and back again from shade to sunshine—not indeed with the same enjoyment,—for in the one it may be warmed, and in the other chilled,—but always with equal readiness. Never the same for two minutes together, it is seen at one shivering with ruffled feathers, and at the next pluming with joy its glossy wing. I can laugh at a funeral, and cry at a wedding, and do both at

a christening—and not for the reasons that might influence you, most philosophic Reader ; but because the fit so takes me, or some trifling trifle calls up a train of associations which *will* strut their part, do what I may to stop them. Would you have an illustration ?—When I was but twelve years old, my father took me to a funeral : and though, with all my wildness, I had made up my mind that it was a horrid thing to die, and a more horrid thing to be buried, and that, therefore, it would be extremely amiable to look sad on the occasion—yet when I saw the people trying so hard to be serious—with eyes uplifted, mouths puckered, and hands folded ; and the few that spoke at all conversing in whispers—as though they feared the dead would come to life again when she heard the music of her favourite instrument— ; and, above all, when I saw the pious creatures, who were so engrossed with the things of the spirit, gulping with quivering lips the funeral wine, and heard their honest sighs as they parted with the glass—I laughed aloud : And then, in an instant, as I looked on the solemn coffin, and thought that the worm would soon be playing with the poor cold corse within, my mirth was changed to shuddering and my laughter to tears. Ere those tears were dried, my father entered the room, and approaching the body, bent over it ; and, as I considered the length and breadth of his monstrous proboscis, I thought—‘ What if the woman be only in a trance, and should wake of a sudden and lay hold of dad’s nose ! ’—The train was fired. At once, I saw the meagre hand pop out of the coffin and grasp the article—I saw the parson struggle as the lady held on—the coffin totter—and fall—the gentleman under and the lady within it, both kicking to get loose—then the living and the dead, pell mell, making for the door—and, to complete the picture, my father’s broomstick legs sweeping in among them. Again I shocked the meeting with a laugh. But when my

father, bending his awful brows, led me to the coffin and bade me look upon the shape therein—as it lay in its stiff, and snow-white shroud, and observe the sunken and livid eyes, the sallow, meagre cheeks, the pinched nose, and the wrinkled lip still distorted with the dying agony—my tears rained down upon the senseless corse, and I sobbed aloud. The charitable party, to comfort my father, shook their heads, and told him—they were sure I should die in a mad-house; my father (when we were at home), to comfort his wife, stripped me to the skin, and flogged me till I could not stand; and I, to comfort myself, broke every thing I could lay my hands on, and swore I would never attend another funeral if I could help it.—But, mercy on me, what a fuss have I been making for a fault, which, after all, will find its best apology in my youth!

—And that fault friend Jeremy?—

And that fault was this. At every pause of Mr. Even's discourse, the trumpet nose of the coroner would break in, like a drawling clerk's "A—men," so whimsically as to make my gravity totter to its base; and his worship's poetical invective of Death's good taste completely overset the fabric. Consider, Reader! I was but seventeen. Set down that; and then, under it, the memory of your own boyhood; add the two together; and the sum will be:—a pardon in full for the penitent Jeremy.

The worthy justice would probably have kicked me from the carriage, in reward of my humour: but I was hypocrite enough to be seized with a fit of sneezing, just in time to save his foot the trouble and his dignity the disgrace of such an action.

We were now within sight of the inn, and, according to our plan, we stopped till the constables had taken an inside seat. Having thus masked our battery, we drove up close to the door; which finding still shut (—for the day had not yet broke),—the coachman was ordered to knock for admittance. Almost immediately, much to our sur-

prise, we heard the creaking of the bolts.* The officers of justice sprang lightly from the carriage and stood in readiness—the door opened—and the murderer himself appeared in the passage. He started back when he saw the men, and attempted to shut the door, but failing—flung it back with a suddenness that threw the latter off their guard—felled the foremost to the earth with a blow of his fist—and endeavoured to rush into the road; but, before he could pass the sill, the other officer—an active, powerful fellow—tripped him up, and casting himself upon him, held the giant down, till I had bound his arms with a cord provided for the purpose.—It was with much difficulty that we succeeded in this, though the officer was assisted by both the coachman and coroner.—Having thus secured the villain, we dragged him into the bar-room, and tied him to a heavy oaken table. As for the hostess—she had been too much frightened to attempt her escape, and was safe in the hands of Justice Even himself.

Just as we had finished securing the criminal, Susan, alarmed by the scuffle, came running into the room, half-dressed. We learned from her,—that she had been awakened during the night by a noise under her window, when looking out she saw, by the moonlight, her mistress and the ostler throwing stones into an old well, which had been for some time the receptacle of every kind of rubbish. She remembered that the former had often talked of having it filled up; but still she thought it singular that such an hour should be chosen for the work. She watched to no purpose, till she was tired, and then returned to her bed, “and went to sleep agin,” thinking,

* The murderer afterwards declared :—that, seeing the justice's carriage approach, he had at once suspected the cause; but that his accomplice (for neither had thought of going to bed after the deed) had ridiculed his fears—telling him, it was impossible his worship could have heard of the murder so soon, and that it would excite suspicion to keep their doors shut against him. “The devil,” he added, “must have put it into neither of our heads—and all for nothin’ but jist to make us be found out—not to think how odd it was his worship should get up so early to go riding.”

very properly—though somewhat late—that it was none of *her* business “to pry into other people’s concerns.”

I watched the countenances of the guilty pair during the housemaid’s recital. That of the man never altered from the sullen, brutish expression, it had worn since his apprehension ; but the woman’s became of an ashy paleness ; yet, when she saw my eyes fixed upon her, it kindled up—the same face which, a few hours before, had looked so lovingly upon me—with an expression of hatred so diabolical, that I was absolutely frightened. True—“Heav’n hath no rage, etc.”

The Justice, leaving the prisoners under the guard of one of the officers, bade Susan lead the way to the well. We accordingly followed her to a yard on the east side of the house. We found a spot where the ground looked fresh : the housemaid brought a shovel ; earth was turned up to the depth of several inches—and then a layer or two of stones,—and then—we saw the poor body lying in a heap, with its face upwards, and so soiled ! so mangled !—Susan, though a girl of no nervous temperament, ran shrieking into the house ; and, as for myself, a feeling like the first attack of sea-sickness came over me, and I staggered—and but for the garden fence I must have fallen.

The body was carried into the house, and an inquest held. In an old chest were found the clothes of the deceased, his watch, a purse of one hundred pounds, and the little trunk about which the hostess had been so anxious—and which was found to contain merely a change of linen, and, as the justice had surmised, some papers relative to real property. It was evident, from the disordered state of these papers, that the trunk had already been searched by the murderers.

The corse was locked up in the house, to remain there till the relations should dispose of it. The coroner undertook to inform the latter of the melancholy news ; and for that purpose used the horse of the deceased, which

he found quietly feeding in the stable—while his poor master ———

Susan, whose presence would be required on the trial of the murderers, was provided with a seat in the justice's own carriage; and the good-hearted man promised to procure her an excellent situation in London.

The evening found us in the city. The justice had the carriage driven to my uncle's door: and there I bade him farewell. And farewell you too must bid him, my Reader:—not that I never saw the worthy man afterwards; but because it suits not with my purpose to reintroduce him to your notice.—And be not displeased that I have been so minute—that I have detailed such particulars as a kind act to a poor housemaid. Ah, my Reader! it is in such little acts that the man is best seen. I have known many who would have robbed their own families to found a charitable institution, but few who would have cared whether Susan starved or not.

Peace to thine ashes, honest Even! Many years have run their rounds, since the earth was rattled on thy coffin; and though the fire of my youth, which once burned so free, is now fast sinking to a few gray embers, still is thy memory as fresh as ever,—one of those few green spots, mid life's arid desert, which raise the drooping spirits, and beguile the toilsome way with hope of more. Honoured and beloved didst thou live,—honoured and beloved didst thou die:—no selfish heir laughed in heart as he brushed the tear-drop from his cheek; but thy children, and thy children's children, mourned sincerely for thy loss; and the poor man sighed as he turned from the grave of his best friend. Peace to thine ashes, honest Even!

CHAPTER X.

So, uncle, there you are!

Hamlet.

I WONDER whether my father's brother resembles him!—thought I, as I timidly let the knocker fall.

Now it is a propensity with which we all are gifted—that for assigning certain qualities of mind and body to individuals of whom we *really* know nothing, but with whom we *expect* to be soon connected. And this we do upon the slightest causes. While reading a work that interests us, we have no distinct image of the author, or of the characters he portrays—unless some particular description be given; yet there flits around us a shadowy perception (if so I may call it) of certain forms, which are agreeable or disagreeable, just as the character please or displease. In this latter case, we act upon firmer ground. But in both the result is much the same—that is to say:—we stare with the Scythians, who looked to meet a giant in Alexander, and found a man five feet some odd inches.

— My uncle is my father's brother; therefore he is like him;—therefore he is tall, lank, and spindle-shanked,—has a long nose, sharp little eyes, heavy brows, and a large mouth—and is as sweet-tempered as a northwest wind in the middle of January. —

This last stroke to the picture, and I stood, like Spinello, frightened by a devil of my own painting. The knocker fell still more gently than at first. Just then, a change in my position threw the light of a lamp directly upon the door-plate. There it was! JEREMY LEVIS! in full. Away flew long noses and northwesterners, Spinello, picture, devil and all—and the knocker rose again;—but fell—as

from the hand of one who had a right to let that knocker fall. Who is it says—"We are the slaves of circumstances"?

After all there is nothing like boldness in asserting one's rights:—The door opened instantly.—"Is Mr. Levis within?" I asked, in a voice as bold as my knock..... "Mr. Levis, sir!" replied the porter, eyeing me from head to foot with the most exquisite contempt—"Why, Mr. Levis hasn't left his room this two year! He isn't in, sir." I could never stand contempt, even from a porter; so I pushed the fellow down by way of satisfaction, ran up stairs, and opened the first door I came to, without ceremony.

A gentleman and lady were seated on a sofa in the room.—My uncle and aunt of course.—The former was a stout, rosy-cheeked, good-looking young man—quite a different person from what I had expected to find. I did not wait to study him further; but seized both his hands.

"How are you, uncle?" He stared. "What! don't you know me? I'm your nephew Jerry, come to London on purpose to see you.—My aunt, I presume?"—turning to the lady with equal affability:—"You see I must introduce myself, aunt: happy to see you look so charming; I've always heard my uncle was a man of taste." I had never heard any such thing: however, that was of no importance.

Mrs. Levis was certainly very good-natured; for she returned the affectionate pressure of her nephew's hand with the utmost cordiality; which was a matter of some surprise in one who could be so stately in speech as my aunt.

"I congratulate myself," said this pattern of female eloquence, in a voice which sounded through her teeth like the squeaking of dough in a wafer-iron, while her eyes, first heaven-ward then earth-ward rolled, like the same wafer-iron in its intervals of giving and receiving—"I congratulate myself, that you have favoured us with a

visitation, nephew; and I have no manner of doubt that your uncle will equally luxuriate in your company. Heigho! poor man—he is so afflicted!—But permit me to have the satisfaction of undoing your misconception, and making you acquainted with this gentleman as Mr. Proxy—a particular friend of mine—I mean, of your uncle's, nephew—a kind of cousin, Mr. Proxy. Mind now and make yourself agreeable, child, till I have prepared the old gentleman for your appearance. Sit down, sit down!"

—Faith!—thought I, as my dignified aunt waddled from the room,—my uncle must be a man of taste indeed, to relish such a stale lump of affectation as this. I'll be sworn the old lady was mistress of a boarding-school, and strutted at the head of many a tittering train of misses, before she took charge of my uncle's cups and saucers. What an ass I was, to take this "particular friend" of her's for my father's brother!—I turned round to consider the gentleman more closely; and the contrast between him and the lady struck me as so ludicrous, that I burst into a fit of laughter. Mr. Proxy looked offended.

"I can't help thinking, Mr. Proxy," said I, throwing myself at full length upon the vacant sofa—for the gentleman had risen with my aunt,—“how odd it was that I should mistake you for the husband of such an old rook as that: why you look fitter to be my aunt's son than her bed-fellow!” Mr. Proxy was a very touchy young gentleman, no doubt; for he turned as red as a lobster in hot water: but unfortunately, just as he was about to open his mouth, my aunt opened the door. “Here, John!” she called to a servant in the passage, “show this young gentleman to Mr. Levis' apartment.”

John did as he was ordered, and I found myself in the presence of an ugly old man, who bore the sign nasal of a Levis. He was seated in an armed-chair, in his night-cap and night-gown, and with his feet wrapped in swaddling clothes like a pair of sucking twins. The moment

he saw me, he bawled out, in a voice that by no means corresponded with his situation :—

“Jerry, my boy! is that you? Damn you, you little rascal, I’m cursedly glad to see you—curse me, if I a’n’t!—Take care of my toe, though—take care of my toe!—Lord bless me, a shake of your hand does me as much good as a dozen of brother Tim’s gallipots—take care of my toe, though—and a devilish deal more, I believe. How did you leave Ichy? I mean that sour, milk-and-water, preaching brother of mine—your father and your mother, Jerry!—All well, boy? heh?—not troubled with the gout at all?—Here, put yourself more in the way of that lamp; I want to see whether you’re a Levis—Ah, you’ve got the family nose, you jackanapes! nothing else!—Your’e too handsome, by the Lord, to look like your father:—let’s see—curse me, if I don’t think you look more like your old uncle here, after all!—But how the devil did you find your way to London? Your father didn’t write me word you were coming—heh?”

I sat down, and drawing my chair close to the old gentleman’s sound side, related my little story, beginning from the causes of my quitting my father’s protection. I did not conceal a single circumstance. And why? Had I grown honest within the hour? Alas, no! my Reader; it was mere policy. Though unaccustomed to the study of character, I plainly saw that my uncle would be better pleased with my story as it was than as I had told it thrice before. Besides, in playing falsely with a relative, I should have run the risk of detection.

I did not err.—When I told him how my father’s severity had driven me from home, the jolly old man swore a tremendous oath—“You did right, Jerry! just as I’d have done, my boy—just as I did, i’faith!—Ichy was always a damned cross fellow! we used to call him butter-milk Ich at school—Well, well! such treatment is enough to send twenty boys to the devil.” When I told him how I had struck Dick Hazard for abusing my father, a tear

of approbation sparkled in my uncle's eye. He slapped me on the back—"Right again, by G——!" The story of Mrs. Maline and the cradle delighted him beyond measure. He rubbed his hands, and laughed so heartily that the nurse came running up fearing he had fallen into a fit; then, with the palm of his right hand resting on my left knee, he exclaimed, with a look that argued well for his nephew's fortune—"Glorious! just like me, Jerry—just like me! Ichy wrote me that he meant to call his boy by my name; but I didn't know he had such good cause for it—Why, you're your uncle over again, you young scape-grace! just such a chap as I was, when I had boy's blood in my veins." In a similar manner, the old man made his comments on the rest of my story. He even condescended to shake his head when I described the flirtation with Miss Townsend. "Ah, you young sprig of the devil! his majesty will never want subjects, while such rogues as you are turned loose among the girls!—But it doesn't become *me* to find fault; for I was just such another at your age—just such another"—and my uncle wound up his moral remarks with a chuckle that let me at once, into some of the secrets of his past life. I went on. "Heavens!" exclaimed my uncle, when I had brought my adventures down to his door, "what a horrid affair! Did you see it all, Jerry?"

"Just as I have described it to you, uncle."

"Truly, nephew—if the rest of your life be but like these two last days, you will never languish for want of excitement!—I should have been better pleased though, had you shown more courage. You might have saved the generous man's life; and if not, and you had lost your own, you would at least have had the satisfaction of dying in a good cause.—I wish you had, Jerry!—I wish you had!"

"Faith! I am much indebted to your good wishes, sir—very much indeed: but how could I have stirred, when I could not?—"

"Well, well! that's true! we can't alter our nature I know, no more than we can help getting the gout; but curse me, if it doesn't sound queer—that—peeping through a hole in the wall, so composedly, to see a friend murdered—curse me, if it doesn't!—But what ails the boy?" he added, perceiving I was hurt by his insinuations—"why, I didn't mean to call your courage in question, child—no, no! not at all! you did the best you could; and that's as much as we can expect in any man; and you've got the murderers safe—that's a great deal too! You shall see them hung, that you shall; and, if it was'nt for this damned podagger, as Dr. Tim calls it, I'd see the rascals hung up myself with pleasure. There's a great deal in that, Jerry! a great deal!—— Ah, here comes your aunt, boy: you must tell your story all over again. There—sit still!——Come, Polly Levis!"—addressing his better, that is to say—his more dignified half—"place your chair on this side. You like horrid stories, and our nephew has one of the best to tell you ever heard.—O! first raise that pillow a little, my foot isn't easy—there!—what the devil's the woman about!—softly—I never saw such awkwardness in my life—there!—so—so—that'll do."

I began to feel a great respect for my uncle Jeremy, when I saw his wife submit without grumbling; for it is not common for a gouty old man to wear the breeches so easily.

It was evident that the lady's "particular friend and kind of cousin," had repeated to her my eulogy on her personal charms; for she declined hearing my story with the utmost suavity of manner, because, as she said, "the child must want repose." But unluckily she had to deal with my uncle—and he, good man, was sure that ten minutes longer could do no harm to the boy's health.

'Tis strange, that a being so delicate as woman should be so greedy of horrors! My aunt, though only one yard and a half in the waist, was so fascinated by my tale

of murder, that I was forced to repeat, for the third time. "the most delectable narrative in which her ears had ever luxuriated." Then I was permitted to retire——

But stop, my reader ; let us first take a sketch of the worthy couple.

My uncle resembled my father sufficiently for a brother ; but was neither so tall, nor so lank. Of the two, he was evidently cut out for the divine ; for his nose, which was of the family size, had a most decided inclination heaven-ward. His eyes, though rather small, were expressive of good humour ; and his mouth, in size like that which fabulists assign to the amiable Ogre, opened every minute to display two hardened ridges of gum, whose barren surface showed one dingy tooth yet standing, like the last remaining wall of a broken-up privy.—— Excuse the unsavoury nature of this comparison : I cannot forbear using it ; as it is apposite in more than one respect.—— In body, my uncle was not of the most delicate proportions :—his belly gave ample proof of the superior fertilizing nature of good living over abstinence. In years he was rather on the other side of fifty, as was evident from the variegated nature of his skin, where hill and valley rose and sunk in the most delightful contrast. He was indeed the oldest of the seven brothers ; and the only one that had ever made a fortune—for the simple reason that he was the only one that had ever tried to make it. Equally passionate and arbitrary with my father, he was kinder in heart :—The latter, when least opposed, relaxed not from his tyrannical severity ; the former you might lead through flood and flame—provided you let him choose, himself, which leg to put foremost in following. He was narrow-minded in ordinary money matters ; yet not so much so as my father—perhaps because his means were greater :—but there were times when the warmth of his feelings would get the better of his selfishness, and then my uncle could be nobly generous. Like his hopeful nephew, he lett

his father's protection in early life. Thus thrown upon his own resources, and without education, he got wisdom in that best of schools—vicissitude; and with all his getting, he got—wealth. His relations, who had disregarded his solicitations for succour, when the poor man was suffering under extreme wretchedness in a foreign clime, received him, when returned to his native land, with the utmost cordiality. But the weather-beaten, rough adventurer cursed them in the indignation of his honest heart, and thrust them successively from his door with his own hand—with two exceptions:—his brothers Timothy and Ichabod. The former he esteemed for his intellectual and moral nobleness; the latter had ever been his favourite. And yet, when this latter begged the rich Mr. Levis to make the humble parsonage his home, my uncle rejected the offer with scorn, openly reproaching his brother with the baseness of his motives. Resolved to live independent, he then bought a house in London, furnished it, and got him a housekeeper in a bankrupt schoolmistress—how recommended I know not. The latter soon became acquainted with my uncle's foible. She humoured it—by making his will her law, by anticipating his every wish, by humbling herself before him lower—than she ever humbled herself before her Maker. The bait was swallowed. My uncle, thinking he saw himself a god in the eyes of his housekeeper, very naturally concluded that she must be a woman of choice taste and practised judgment. Thus, becoming pleased with his own person, he discovered charms in hers; and, before many months were over, Mrs. Housekeeper shared the bed as well as board of Mr. Jeremy Levis. The match was not a bad one:—Mrs. Levis, though a fool in many other respects, had the good sense, or cunning if you please, to continue, after her marriage, in the same line of conduct which had led to that marriage. Thus, both parties were satisfied. He fancied he held the power in *his* hands—and that was sufficient for him; she knew

she held the power in *hers*—and that was sufficient for her.

As to my aunt's good qualities—they consisted of an inexhaustible fund of good-nature, and a generosity almost prodigal. For her foibles—they were, chiefly, vanity and pedantry: the latter the consequence of her quondam occupation; the former founded upon claims of beauty, of which the reader shall himself judge—as thus:—Her body was short and squab, with the legs stuck in, as well I could see, like the wooden supporters of a square-breeched doll—that is to say, perpendicularly; consequently, her walk was duck-fashion. Her head was very like what charitable painters clap upon the apoplectic neck of that bulwark of female chastity, the Spanish duenna. Of this article the eyebrows were broad and shaggy—the eyes bilious, and destitute of expression—the nose lumpy, with a scar across the tip; which gave it the appearance of being tied with a thread, as children make cherries of their tongues—and the mouth—O, the mouth would have been decidedly good, had the lips been a little shorter, a little thinner, and a little redder, and the teeth a little whiter. As to the lady's bad qualities———of those anon.

CHAPTER XI.

Rous'd from his rest, he waken'd in a start,
Shiv'ring with horror, and with aching heart;
At length to cure himself by reason tries :
'Twas but a dream ! And what are dreams but lies !
So thinking, chang'd his side, and clos'd his eyes.
His dream returns ; his friend appears again,
'The murd'ers come ; now help, or I am slain !'
'Twas but a vision still, and visions are but vain.

Chaucer's Tale of the Nun's priest—by DRYDEN.

I RETIRED to bed ; but not to sleep. The moment my wearied senses began to doze, hellish dreams, bred of the last night's horrors, would rack them into waking. In vain I tried to shake those fancies off :—I buried my head beneath the cover—still they were there : I rose and walked the floor of my apartment—the phantoms walked before me. I wrapped the sheet around me, and sat at the open window. All was hushed to that beautiful stillness I have ever loved so well—the stillness of night ; the air was soft and balmy, and the stars glimmered gaily in the heaven : but that stillness threw no calm over my troubled spirit—that air refreshed not my fevered brain—and those stars assumed to me the very forms I had tried to shun, and seemed to mock me. It was maddening. I could fain have cried aloud. I rolled myself over and over on the carpet ; I assayed all the efforts I could devise to rid me of my fancies : but they were the efforts of a child—for I did not see that the enemy gained strength by my resistance.

Violent emotions quickly exhaust themselves, as every body has heard and experienced. Thus—the agitation of my feelings, like troubled waters, soon flowed off, and left the channel free to reflection. It was therefore with

some degree of calmness that I reviewed the events of the last night ; and the only circumstance whose recollection made me shudder was the conduct of the hostess—What wonder ! when after forty years I cannot recal it without a throbbing of the heart.

—“ And I have dallied with that woman ! ”—I said to myself—“ been pressed in the hot embrace of a murderess ! and flattered myself, fool that I was, that my person tempted her.—And what a face ! So smooth—so deceitful ! O, God ! that the outside of the fruit should be so wholesome when the core within is rotten ! * * * *

* * * * * Where is thy justice, Heaven, that thou cuttest off the useful, the kind, the good, and sufferest to triumph the hard-hearted and the worthless ! Where thy goodness, that thou makest the very exercise of his virtues a pitfall in the path of the righteous ?—What though the wicked drag himself in with his victim—should the good man suffer that the evil man may perish ? ”—

The first blight that falls upon the youthful spirit, the first worm that gnaws around the bud of its imaginings,—that turns to loathsome blackness its fondest hopes, in their first day of bloom, and clips the tendrils of its young affections, just when they have found a hold whereon to cling,—is—deceit. When we have chosen, for our friend, one whose soul seemed twin-brother of our own,—when the same studies and the same sports, the same likings and the same dislikes, have made us fondly fancy that hand in hand we should descend together life's rugged hill,—when this darling-friend betrays our confidence,—when we detect, in this counterpart of ourself, some little meanness—be it ever so little—that is abhorrent from our own natures,—with what an ague chill it comes upon the trusting heart to find itself deceived ! One spot thus rubbed off from the gay colouring, in which all things have hitherto seemed decked, and the picture loses its charms ; for Suspicion whispers that the rest may be

as fleeting. Thus are we taught our first lesson in mistrust; and, if the mind be sensitive, misanthropism is not slow to follow.

The next shock, perhaps, to the youthful mind, is—a doubt in the goodness of its creator. It is a commonplace observation that we all enter manhood with the most exalted expectations, which the wisest lessons in the world can never teach us to regard as unfounded. Nay, even when convinced that they are so, we ever make an exception in favour of ourselves, and, while we prate of the depravity of the world, give the lie to our assertions by confiding in its honour. But, when a little experience has taught us that these descriptions are not, altogether, the mis-shapen bantlings of a poet's brain—nor the gloomy phantasies of a diseased sensibility—nor the partial sketches of Discontent; when some other hand hath turned down for us the green leaf of the flower, and shown the worm coiled up beneath; when we find that in this life virtue meets not always its reward, that the wicked are, to all appearance, happy, and the righteous, miserable,—in fine, that to the latter all is loss, and to the former all is gain,—we murmur; and unable, from the narrowness of our infant judgments, to comprehend the wisdom, we boldly impeach the justice of Providence. From this moment, a change is wrought within us; and, according to the bent of our dispositions, the manner of our education, or the society in which we move, we become roguish, sceptical, or morose; till age teaches us better, or—confirms us in our errors.

Such, so bitter were my feelings, as I revolved, again and again, the fate of the kind-hearted Mr. A——. I could not conceive it to be just, that a man of so good report should be cut off in the midst of his usefulness, and in the very performance of a benevolent action—that so goodly a trunk should perish, while I, a sickly, crooked sapling, should be suffered to grow up—an incumbrance perhaps—affording no fruit, no shelter, not

even pleasure to the sight. For the first time in my life, I was truly unhappy ; and when the morning rose it found me stretched upon the bed in a high fever—the natural consequence of anxiety and watching.

CHAPTER XII.

I beseech you, heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner: besides your cheer, you shall have sport; I will show you a monster.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

Oh ! que les voilà bien tous formés l'un pour l'autre !
Quelle belle famille !

L'École des Maris.

THE trial of the criminals resulted as might be expected. After condemnation, the wretched woman confessed that the murder had been planned during the temporary absence of Mr. A—— and myself; and that, having a phial of laudanum in the house, she had powerfully drugged the wine, for the more easy accomplishment of her villainy. I did not attend the execution. Worlds should not have tempted me.

I grew rapidly in my uncle's good graces, and before the end of a week was looked upon by every one as his heir—that is to say, with deep respect. As for my aunt, there was no great difficulty in appeasing her. I had only to state that "her particular friend and cousin" had made a slight mistake—that I had not said that she looked old enough to be his mother, not I indeed, but that "I did not wonder at my taking her and Mr. Proxy for man and wife, as she looked young enough to be my uncle's daughter."....."I thought he was under a great deception," replied my aunt....."Certainly, aunt," said I,—"*One so beautiful as —, certainly—a very great deception.*"

aunt!" The old lady was good-natured, I have already told you, Reader.

—And how old was your aunt?—

O, somewhere between fifty and one hundred.

Perfectly convinced of the superior comfort to be enjoyed in a fortune like my uncle's, and unwilling to disappoint so many friends—friends so respectful,—I set myself to work to secure the reversion of it. The most likely means of effecting this object was, of course, to secure the owner. My uncle, then, I gained over by discovering resemblances between him and his nephew—by lending a diligent ear to his hard stories—by fondling his bitch, a monstrous shaggy brute, as ugly as sin and as black as sin's father (—my uncle called her Rose; though my nose is witness that she did not merit the appellation,)—and by tending his toe. The old gentleman grew so fond of me at last, that I seemed as necessary to his existence as his bread and butter. It was "Jerry, you devil!" and "Damn you, Jerry!" (both expressions of endearment) and "Here Jerry!" and "Jerry, do this," and "Jerry, do that,"—Jerry, Jerry, Jerry, from morning to night.

My aunt's favour I secured—and it was doubly securing my uncle's—by gentle doses of commendation judiciously administered, by not looking too sharply, where looking sharply was not expected, and by escorting her on various little visits of business or pleasure. Whether the latter were ever visits of pleasure for me—"Accipe nunc,—et—ab uno Disce omnes."

We were invited to dinner by the Foxes, my aunt's most intimate friends. The invitation was accepted. The first object that struck my eyes, on entering the room where we were received, was a man of most villainous aspect, who was named to me as Mr. Fox himself. He was of middling stature, and so flat in body that it seemed as though he had been pressed between two boards, except at the upper part, where—from humility

no doubt—he had acquired a habit of stooping. His head, which appeared to be stuck upon his shoulders without the common intervention of a neck, was elongated in shape, and remarkably small; which littleness of appearance was nothing bettered by a huge wig, worn awry through an ill-disguised affectation of carelessness. The forehead was of that kind which, even at first, never fails to disgust:—low, contracted, retreating from the brow, and deeply wrinkled. The eyes, extremely small and sunken, almost always cast down, but when raised sharp and sinister in their expression, lay so nigh together, that it seemed as they would concentrate their vision into one but for the nose, and were just streaked above their sockets by the faintest brows of pale yellow. The nose, small and bony, was pointed at the end, and pinched like that of a person in the last stage of a consumption;—some said it had never recovered from the pressure of a thumb and forefinger, which had once grasped the unoffending member, probably in mistake of its owner's hand. The mouth was—damnable,—having that mixed expression of lasciviousness, stupidity, and hypocrisy, which to me is the most revolting character in the human countenance:—its lips, both upper and under, being perfectly alike in size and shape, long, thin (yet pouting from the jaws,) watery, and of a bright red colour, and terminated at either end by a deep wrinkle. I say again, the mouth was damnable. This disgusting face was terminated by a short, pointed chin, and set off by a pair of most vulgar ears, standing directly from the head, and possessed of that rare power in the muscle, by which the wearer could prick them, like a startled horse, when any thing was said that touched his interest. Over these features was drawn a sickly, greenish skin.

The character of Mr. Fox was as villainous as his person. As no time, my Reader, can be more convenient than the present, you shall partake at once the benefit of my researches on that point. He was the son of—any

body that chose to claim him. Maintained—like other great men—at the expense of his country, he was taught to read and write in the common school of his native parish, and, at a suitable age, bound apprentice to a baker. Under the latter he pursued the honourable vocation of crying tea-rusk and gingerbread about the streets of London, till Fortune one day brought him, tired in limbs and lungs, to the door of a Lottery Office. The young gingerbread merchant threw the basket from his shoulder, dashed the sweat from his forehead, and, attracted by the large flaming characters on the boards that hung from the window, called up from the tomb of memory the buried learning of his Primer ;—in plain, prosaic English, he began to spell. On what slender hinges swing the fate of empires ! How slight a straw may sway the destiny of kings ! Less than a straw decided that of our youngster ! He read the bill, as many others had before him ; like many others he admired its import ; and like many others he believed the generous man, who offered the eighth part of five thousand pounds for two shillings and sixpence “only.” With—as some historians wisely conjecture—the sum total of the farthings given in charity to the poor baker’s boy, and saved through many a sore temptation ; or—according to the foolish supposition of others—with the fruits of a speculation worthy of his dawning genius, wherein he charged a penny half-penny for what his master sold at a penny, and set the overplus half-penny to his own account, he bought the eighth of a ticket.

One of those happy creatures that are born to bask in the sunshine and never see the shade—the subject of our story was successful in this his first enterprise, and now saw himself richer than his master. No day for work was that in which he learned his good fortune : he told his master how things had turned out with him, borrowed a crown, and obtaining leave of absence, adjourned to a neighbouring eating-house. Here, calling for something

nice with all the dignity of one who knows he means to pay, he took up a newspaper to amuse him while his fare was cooking. . Blessed be all charity schools ! his fortunate eye fell upon the advertisement of a " respectable lawyer " that wanted " a boy who could readily turn his hand to any thing ; and who would consider as a compensation for his services the instruction he should receive in the profession." The ashes, which had hitherto concealed the smouldering fire of his ambition, were blown aside by this whiff of an advertisement, and the coals began to show what they were. Baking was now too mean a business for a lad of his pocket, and the law only could serve his turn.—Luckily for his money, which might otherwise have slipped through his fingers—if indeed it had ever reached them,—his master was an honest man, and taught him to dispose of it in the safest and most profitable manner.

To shorten a long story :—The lawyer, liking the shrewdness and impudence of the baker's boy, took him into his office. There, amid the menial duties of fire-making and street-sweeping, John Fox (—such was the name our youth now adopted, borrowing it from his late master for want of one of his own—) gathered sufficient knowledge, of a profession admirably suited to one of his genius for roguery, to capacitate him for cheating his neighbour in a manner the most satisfactory to both parties.—As his luck would have it, opposite the office where he worked in the double capacity of lawyer's clerk and servant-boy, there lived a weakly brewer, whose daughter, the sole fruit of a marriage with a reputable laundress, was a match for Fox in ugliness, and more than his match in impudence. Our hero, being made of more inflammable matter than the heroes of romance, took fire at the mere mention of the lady's fortune—made love to her—won her. The brewer, seeing that the young man was "likely to do well in the world," and learning moreover that he had some little capital to be-

gin with, offered no opposition to his daughter's wishes. The lovers were married; and, shortly after, John Fox on the door of a neat little office nailed up a neat little sign announcing himself an attorney at law. In less than a year both his wife's parents died, and Lawyer Fox became a wealthy, and, of course, an honourable man. No one, now, presumed to doubt his right to style himself Esquire; and John Fox, Esquire, Attorney at Law, was treated by all his neighbours with vast respect.

The Reader, no doubt, remembers the fifth satire (Lib. II.) of Horace. If not, let him read it attentively; as it contains, word for word, the rules by which our lawyer regulated his after conduct. How that happens I cannot say:—perhaps, though great men may differ, great scoundrels are the same all the world over. However—our lawyer's plan was certainly successful, and legacies flowed in from all quarters.

But his cunning, excellent as it was, proved no match for my uncle's simplicity. The honest old man, in a manner peculiarly unpleasant to our lawyer's feelings, told him he was “a damned puppy;” and had him kicked down stairs by the porter, regretting at the time his own incapacity to “wait on Mr. Fox in person.” Now, no man likes to be called “a damned puppy.” Not that either “damned” or “puppy” is a bad word by itself; for the appellation of “a *damned* clever fellow,” or “a *damned* good-natured fellow,” or “a *damned* fine fellow,” is not by any means offensive; and mothers, in the vivacity of their affection, will bid a mischievous urchin, “Be done, you naughty little *puppy*!” and the knowing little one only takes it for encouragement: but couple the adjective and substantive together, as thus;—“Sir, you're a *damned puppy*,” and, fire and furies! all the blood in a man's veins rushes boiling hot into the face, and in the energy of passion the fist begins to gesticulate. Furthermore—the application of the foot to the nether extremity, operating by a simple mechanical principle to

send the blood upwards, is attended with precisely the same result. How then when both these are united? You yourself, my Reader, "gentle" as you are, would have forced the "puppy" down my uncle's throat in spite of the sentinel tooth, and thrown the servant from the staircase. But lawyer Fox knew better; he was a cool man: he swallowed both affronts without making a single wry face, and, resolute not to yield the point, turned tail and paid court to my aunt. Matters were proceeding bravely in this quarter, when suddenly another personage appeared upon the field, and the battery was changed. That personage was myself. Lawyer Fox saw with the eye of a general that he might bring the whole estate into his family—and without weakening his chance of a legacy in case the plan should fail—by attaching me to one of his two daughters.

O; they were sweet creatures, the Misses Fox! Soft and impressible as a roll of butter, and about as interesting—to a man without appetite. They never spoke above a whisper; and then, it was for all the world like the cutting of cork, or the whistling of a greaseless grindstone, or the squeaking of a squeezed swine.

The younger, Sophronia-Sophonisba-Semiramis Fox, was evidently the joint production of Mr. Fox and Mrs. Fox; for she had the former's shingle figure, yellow hair, rascally forehead, and villainous mouth, with the latter's lumpy nose, gooseberry eyes, and pimpled skin. Her gait was the most graceful I ever saw—far, very, far superior to that of a crab:—She would bring her body half round, first upon one hip, then upon the other; thrust forward a monstrous, flat foot, in which the leg was stuck like the whisk mast in a child's boat of shingles; erect her head, as a hen on the watch for flies; and, with her arms swinging time to the measure of her legs, march—as if she had forgotten something.

The elder, Lucretia-Messalina-Jugurtha, was a strange contrast to her sister in every thing but voice and man-

ners. She was of a pretty, round little figure, and had a regularly beautiful face ; but just such a one as you may see in any print-shop—inanimate. Where she got this prettiness of appearance I cannot say. Some persons, however, whispered strange stories about her mother's haste to marry, and one of the brewer's apprentices ;—but psha ! such things are mere scandal ; any cattle dealer will tell you “ a good cow may have a bad calf,”—and I cannot see why a bad cow may not have a good calf, just as well.—This latter was the lady whose charms, our lawyer hoped, should entrap me ; but the bait was not sufficiently tempting. I never could bear your insipid beauties. They are like a clear moonlight sky—well enough ; but if we would not tire of the prospect, there must be something to vary it—even though a thundercloud.

There was present, besides the Fox family, a Mrs. Bulleye—a wrinkled lady with large lobster eyes, who, it was plain to be seen, still thought herself “ something.” I classed her at once among the ruminating animals, as she was constantly turning her tongue in her mouth, or drawing the air through her teeth. It was indeed the only decent way of accounting for such practices—except, perhaps, by supposing that she indulged herself occasionally with *lady's twist*. She had with her a grandchild, an ugly little abortion, whom she was continually importuning the company to admire. “ Just turn round, my dear, and let the lady see your neck,” she would say, uncovering a skin where the flies and bed-bugs seemed to have been rioting in emulation, and winking to my aunt,—or “ What's that on your ear, my love ?”—again winking, for my aunt to admire what, to me, looked very like a large oyster. Children are acute observers :—the little thing, though but six years old, was evidently already spoiled by grandma's flattery, and would pout its blubber lips with all the conceit of admired sixteen.

We withdrew to the dining-room; where it was so managed that I occupied the seat next to my intended. This arrangement was by no means agreeable to Miss Sophronia: she therefore, being a lady of frank demeanour, edged her chair in on the other side of me, declaring she had "as good a right to set by Mr. Levis as sister!" The lawyer frowned and said nothing; but his partner saw fit to correct so glaring a breach of decorum.

"Phrony, my love, I am shocked, and astonished, and surprised, that a young lady of your education and society should show such an open brich of etiquette. One would think you'd never seen better company than tinkers, or taylors, or ———"

"Brewers," added Mr. Fox, maliciously.

"Or bakers," continued Mrs. Fox, indignantly. "Come, take your seat by me, this instant, Miss Sophronia!"

"La, ma'! I'd rather set by Mr. Levis than you,"—whined the dutiful Sophronia; "he's more agreeable, I'm sure."

O, for shame, Miss Fox! to tell a young gentleman you like him! Fie! the carnibals would know better!"

"And I can't see the mighty harm in that, either!" retorted the young lady, while her voice actually rose the sixtieth part of a degree above her ordinary whisper; "you told me your own self, ma', that you did, when I was putting on my new silk stockens for dinner, that I must mind and make myself agreeable to the gentleman, and let him see I know what's what; and so I will!"

I know not what disclosures might have been made, over and above the stockings, had not our lawyer put a timely end to the quarrel by rising to say grace.

"Ah!" exclaimed the hypocrite, when he had finished, "great is the exultation of piety, that it even adds a relish to our vegetables! I can't conceive how any man alive can suffer the concatenation of God's benefactions to be showered upon him in the multiplicity of his providence,

and yet be ingrateful ! For my part, I couldn't swallar a mouthful if ——”

“If you preach so long, you wount, Mr. Fox !” said his wife ; “the dinner is catching cold.”

“Odd rot it, and that's true ! Qui capit, ille facit, as we lawyers say—Mrs. Levis what'll you take ?”

The absurdity of our host's conversation, made up, as it was, of a mixture of far-fetched and misapplied expressions with vulgar oaths and idioms, was too amusing for me to resist the temptation of prolonging it—the more so that I had learned his history from my aunt.

“Pray, tell me, Mr Fox,” said I, in a tone of respectful gravity, and taking up the plate before me, whereon was painted——a coat of arms, dear Reader ! with a fox's head as crest.—“Are not these the arms of your family ?”

“Ah, my dear sir !” exclaimed the lawyer, throwing down the knife and fork, which he had began to flourish in quality of host,—“there is my greatest pride ! the only flaw ! the locum tenens, as I may say, of my character ! Yes, sir,” he continued, springing from his chair in a seeming ecstasy,—“you see before you the armorial bearings of the house of Fox ! and, much as I estimate every man the child of his own deeds,—and God knows how prideless I am !—still there is a satisfaction, an exacerbation of feeling, to know yourself the—the sprout, the Zion of an opprobrious family ! to know that ——”

“The dinner is waiting, Mr. Fox !”

“Bless me, that's true !—to know that one is not like this mushroom gentility, which springeth up, and is cut down, dried, and withered, in a day ; but like the—the—Look there, Mr. Levis ! look there !”——

“Look there, indeed, Mr. Fox ! See what comes of your speechifying !” screamed the wife of his bosom, as the roast beef in its superb China dish fell crashing on the floor.

"Five guineas smashed at once!" exclaimed Mr. Fox, with horror.

"My chany dinner-set completely spiled!" whimpered Mrs. Fox, wringing her hands.

"Mrs. Levis's dress all spattered over!" said Lucretia, with a squeak.

"And the roast beef not fit to be ett!" added Semiramis, with a whine.

"And who the devil knocked it off?" questioned the lawyer, as he turned with indignation on his spouse—"It cost me five gold guineas!—that single dish!—Who knocked it off, I say?"

"Why, who but yourself, to be sure!" replied the lawyer's wife, with all the fury of an irritated woman—"What need had you of sweeping your coat-tails round into the dish for, I should like to know? with your fine speeches to Mr. Levis! I dare say the young-gentleman is laughing in his sleeve at you all the time."

The mention of my name reminded Mr. Fox that he had guests; and at once,—even as the rain-clouds flit from a summer sky—as a dog's growl ceases at the sight of his loved master—as the grunt of a hog is hushed at the balmy smell of the swill,—so changed the looks, the voice of John Fox, Esquire, Attorney-at-law. Ah! it is so lucky to have such self-command!

"Well, well!" said *the Zion of an opprobrious family*—smiling as a frog does when swallowing a worm—, "thank God it's no worse! what can't be cured must be endured. Jeremiah! take away the pieces, and the—Pompey's run off with the beef!—What the devil did you let that dog—?—and Jeremiah, put the pieces—you understand me, Jeremiah. Well, Mrs. Fox, since you have proven rem in re, as we gentlemen of the bar say,—that is to signify;—since you have manifested and convicted the tail of my coat in your China dish (holding up his gravy-daubed tail), we will find the defendant guilty—which is myself—of an assault and battering on your roast beef.——"

I don't know what you mean, Mr. Fox, by salt and buttering my roast beef," grumbled Mrs. Fox,—“I scorn the insinuation, that's what I do! but I know you'd better help the company; for the vigibles and the meats are all stone cold.”

“And this ere tongue is rather short, ma’,” added Miss Sophronia, nosing the article in question.

“Hush, hush, my daughter! you shouldn't make sich observations in company.”

“Why, ma’, I know what's what, I think; and I'll trust my nose with our dog Pompey's any time. I'll lay you what you dare it's spoilt!”—and she smelt the tongue again—“I'll leave it to Cretiey here if it doesn't smell funny. You've got a big nose, Mr. Levis; you try it, since ma' wont believe me.”

It was a delicate case; but the father saved me, by breaking in upon the conversation.

“Well, I beg your pardon, Mrs. Levis—since my wife thinks I'm wrong; and yours, my excellent young friend; and yours too, Mrs. Bulleye: but I'm so adapted to forget myself when I discourse of my family! You know, Mr. Levis, this is such an age of upstart gentility, that one's apt to be proud of extinguished descent. But no matter, I will kill two birds with one stone, as my Lord Phantom said to me t'other day—said he—I'll help you Mrs. Levis, and at the same time tell your excellent nephew the narrative in which I was so maliciously disarranged. What part shall I help you to, Mrs. Levis? Or would you prefer some of that 'ere nice goose, to which I see Mrs. Fox is helping Mrs. Bulleye!—I was about to tell you, my young and honoured friend, to look there at that noble picture.” Here he rose as before, first taking the precaution to tuck his coat-tails under his left arm, while with his right he pointed to one of a row of portraits—which certainly were not over thirty years old, and probably had been bought at some sheriff's sale. “You see there the head of my family! that great and extin-

guished man, from whom we have induced our origin, and the mutability of our name!—Look there, Mr. Levis! Look there, sir! *He* was indeed a man—“aye! every inch a *man*!” as the divine and pathetic Milton says of Juliet—you admire Milton, Mr. Levis?”

“Why—yes!” drawled I; “but between you and me, Mr. Fox,”—lowering my voice, and winking very facetiously—“he’s rather indelicate.”

“Ah! only rich passages! only rich passages, Mr. Levis!”—and the critic smacked his lips in a manner very edifying to young people. . “Yes, sir!” he continued—“he was every inch a man!—but, ask your pardon, what will you have sir? Jeffrey! hand me Mr. Levis’s plate.—He was a great favourite with Henry the ninth, and particularly surpassed in the exercise of extirpating and eradicating foxes—Ha, ha! you begin to smoke it, I see, Mr. Levis!—Well, one day as my ancestor—he was generally known by the name of Bravo John, from his fearfulness you understand,—was hunting with his majesty in the royal forests, they started a huge white fox with a black mane and red tail. This fox with a red mane and black tail, defied the outmost adventures of the king and all his court—tearing up the ground with his teeth, scattering fire from his blazing nostrils, and breathing havoc and destitution on every one in the company. So at length his gracious majesty, whom God in heaven bless! was pleased—but I tire you, I deprehend?—was pleased to say, “Which one of you, my respected friends, will eradicate that fox for me?” Then up started Bravo John, my ancestor; and, poisoning himself upon his knees, he deprecated his majesty——” Here the noble descendant of Bravo John was interrupted by Mrs. Bulleye’s grandchild, which insisted upon thrusting its hand into the dish of pease. “Ah, you naughty little darling! you must’nt do so!” said grandmama, while she wiped the darling’s hand with her cambric handkerchief—“the lady wout like it. Don’t cry, now; and grandmā’ will give it a new

dolly, so she will ! Do look at its sweet little hand, Mrs. Levis !—She's a very good little girl ; but so playful ! Did you ever see such pretty little fingers and such pink nails ?" (The little Bulleye stopped crying,) "There, dear, now you're a good girl."

Mr. Fox resumed :—"My ancestor—But where was he ?"

"Poising himself upon his knees."

"O ! Bravo John poised himself upon his knees, and deprecated his majesty to let him eradicate that fox, and he would bring him in alive, without letting one drop of his blood. His majesty smiled dissent, and my ancestor undressed himself upon the spot—first drawing behind a tree, not to propitiate his sovereign by uncovering his naked part—which was extremely delicate, Mr. Levis. We were always a delicate family. Witness my wife and daughters : they wont even put on their drawers without turning their backs."—Here the mother thought proper to wriggle, and the daughters to hang their heads.—"Undressed and clothed himself in the skin of a fox.—Jefrey, Jeremiah ! why don't you attend to the plates ?—He then crept out from behind the tree, and making his obedience to his majesty—By the by, his majesty had like to have extirpated him, he assimilated a fox so much. His highness had already cocked his horse pistol, when my ancestor, like the ass in the fable, thrust out his head, and his majesty knew him at once.—Crept out from behind the hill and set off after the fox on all fours, which was to assimilate the fox you know—the fox being an amphibious animal, like all other reptiles. Reinhard looked back, and seeing my ancestor galloping after him misapplied him for one of his genius, and whinnying made a dead pause. What does my ancestor do ? Why he pretends to smell him, creeps right up straight to him, and lays hold of his white tail with one hand, and his black throat with the other, and takes him up in his arms to his majesty. King Charles was so exalted, that he

knighted him on the spot, and prohibited him ever afterwards to resume the application of Sir John Fox, and a fox's head for his shield—as I believe they nominate it in the herald's office. But God knows! it is a foolish thing, Mr. Levis—a most wicked thing, in the sight of our Maker, to take airs into one's self, because one is more opprobriously born than one's neighbours! God knows I should never have predicated of my ascent, if you hadn't have cross-examined me, as we gentlemen of the bar are wont to say, as to the armorial bearings of the house of Fox, which I have painted on my china, my carriage, and indeed on every thing I've got, even on my bed utensils. You see, Mr. Levis, that there thing is the shield part, the head of a fox—”

“And where is the *wheat-sheaf*?” asked his wife with malicious eagerness. She had not forgotten, it seems, the taunt of the “brewers.”

“O! your mother *washed* that out,” coolly answered the husband.

Mrs. Fox gnawed her nails; her daughters stared; Mrs. Bulleye patted the neck of little Bulleye; and my aunt trod on my toes.

—And yourself, Mr. Levis?—

O—I laid the corner-stone of an observation which I have since built up. And that observation, dear Reader, is this:—that the desire of being thought witty, is strong even with the witless. High and low, learned and illiterate, grave and gay; from the rulers of state to the rulers of hogs, from the priest that is shaven to the barber that shaves,—all make their smart speeches; and grin themselves when they have none else to grin for them. Well! it is better to make people laugh than cry,—and *I* have no objections.

—But the Foxes' wit was rank sarcasm.—

Well! I have no objection to that—provided *I* am not bespattered.

During the rest of our visit I was wicked enough to devote my exclusive attention to Miss Sophronia-Sophonisba-Semiramis ; which her pretty sister seemed to take as a matter of course. The parents, at first, looked rather mortified ; but, at length, began to think my attentions real. What a world of winks, and taps, and loud whispers, was then passed from the worthy couple to my aunt !

“How pretty the innocent creatures look !” said Mrs. Fox.

“How exhilarating !” added Mr. Fox.

“They’re cut out for each other as like as two eggs !” remarked the former.

“Who knows ?”—rejoined the latter, winking hard,—“What say you, Mrs. Levis ? Shall we—? hum ! you take me—heh ?”

But as for poor Sophronia—she was in a wonderously pleasant taking :—She sighed—like the wind through a cracked board ; looked tender—as a clam when roasting ; trod on my toes—till I was tempted to pinch her ; and made silly speeches, which came from her silly mouth as aptly—as a smell from a dunghill.—The comparison is good, if not nice.—She drank wine too—merely to oblige me ; and became at last so fuddled, that even her mother noticed it.

“Phrony, Phrony ! you’d better not take any more wine, my love. Young ladies mustn’t drink like the gentlemen, you know.”

“La, ma’ ! I wish you wouldn’t ! you needn’t be teaching me at this time o’day : I know what’s ginteel as well as sister, that’s what I know. I a’n’t forgot I must never refuse when a gentleman asks me to take wine !”—and down went the glass I had already filled.

“Ma foi, les filles sont ceque l’ on les fait être !”

“Well, Jerry !” said my aunt, as the footman closed the carriage-door, “what think you of the Foxes ?”

"That they are not worth visiting a second time."

"But Mr. Fox?—he is a good, and clever man, I assure you, in spite of his ridiculous pretensions to birth."

"O! in that particular, I think Mr. Fox is perfectly right; for, the family records being lost, he may well be the descendant of Bravo John, or of Prester John for aught we know,—aye, or even of his gracious majesty himself, King Henry the ninth—whom God in heaven bless!"

"Well, Jerry—I see you are an incipient satirist; so we will not argue the matter. But in what consideration do you hold Mrs. Bulleye? Do you not estimate her as a lady in whom the kindlier feelings are remarkably predominant?"

"Certainly! I should suppose her a woman of my dear mother's disposition—somewhat too fond for the good of her child."

"You shall judge" answered my aunt, with a smile the most like nature that had ever thinned her lips—at least since I had known her.—"She has had cohabitant with her, for some time, her uncle and her aunt; both of whom are already in their second childhood, deaf, and almost blind. The old people possess some little property; to which there are many heirs besides the lady in question, and all equally near. It is therefore her policy to keep the aged pair with herself as much as is practicable. Being extremely avaricious, she denies them not only the comforts due to their age, but even the necessities of existence. Life must cling indeed to this poor tenement, for them to live on what they do! They have not sufficient to eat, nor sufficient to drink, nor even a sufficient change of raiment. The very sheets on their bed—and the miserable pair are obliged to sleep together, and on a narrow bed of straw, Jerry!—look as though they had been unaired for ages; and the atmosphere of their room is that of a sick chamber,—it would stifle me to occupy it."

"The lady never suffers any of the few friends her uncle and aunt have still left them, to enter the apartment, except when accompanied by herself,—lest the poor creatures, in their childishness, should tell tales of her cruelty. I may call myself one of their oldest friends—since I can well remember when the old man was wont to dandle me on his knee, and call me his "pretty pet"*—, and have therefore, hitherto, held it my duty to pay them a monthly visit. But one day, in the commencement of last December, I stopped at the house and found Mrs. B. out, according to the servant. Thinking it, therefore, a favourable opportunity for a little private conversation with my old friends, I did not hesitate to pass the servant and ascend the stairs to their apartment—which was in the third story! I had my hand upon the lock, when Mrs. B. herself rushed from an adjoining room, and, with some precipitation, expressed herself sorry that I could not see her uncle, as he was "taking a nap." I still persisted; and she was obliged to open the door. Will you believe me, nephew, when I say that the old people were sitting without a fire? on a cold winter's day!—Mrs. B. said:—"The grate required a little fixing."

"Why not remove them then to another room?" I replied.

"O, they're too dirty! We never could permit it."

"Mary—is that you?"—asked the old man, in a feeble, childish voice. "Come hither, Mary! Don't you feel cold?"—and the poor creature shivered, and drew his threadbare coat about him. My heart bled: I turned to the old woman. She was seated with the same newspaper before her she had had for the last ten years, vainly trying to spell it over. I had chanced to bring a cake with me, which I gave her. She grasped it with the eagerness of a hungry child.

* How strangely must my aunt have altered since then!—Vid. Chap. X. ad finem.

"Look here deary"—she said, as she held it out to the old man,"—see what a pretty cake I've got ! all with windows in !" I could have wept ; but Mrs. B. was by, and I restrained my tears.

"They're just so always, Mrs. Levis," said the hard-hearted woman. "They have such quantities of cake made for them ! besides jellies of every kind ! and they eat it all without relishing it ; and are just as hungry as before. Look now !"—and indeed the old man had snatched the morsel from his wife, and was devouring it as though he had not eaten any thing that day.

"Child, I should like some drink," said the poor creature to his neice.

"You must not have any, uncle ; it isn't good for you."

The old man never grumbled ; but, like a scolded child, began to play with his fingers. I could bear it no longer :—

"Why not give him some drink," I said, "if he desires it ? Your uncle is old, and requires some such stimulant. It would not harm him, if he had it three or four times a day."

"He would only make a beast of himself, if I gave it to him,"—pettishly answered the neice. "And besides, Mrs. Levis, you'll allow me to be as good a judge as yourself of what is best for them."

"So I do, ma'm ; and all the harm I wish you, for suffering sordid interest to get the better of such *judgment*, is, that you may one day yourself suffer as they do and have no one to help you." And I left the room, vowing to myself never to enter it again. But Mrs. Bulleye, probably thinking her conduct might do her prejudice, rejoined me on the stairs, and apologized."

"You know not, Mrs. Levis," said the hypocrite, "how much I suffer by those old people : night and day they are continually needing help."

"Why not hire a nurse then ?"

"No one would stay with them a single night, they are

so troublesome. I fear it will kill me before long ! I grow thinner and thinner every day ;—but, alas ! it is my duty, Mrs. Levis !”

“ I looked at her fat person without speaking, and left the house. Since then I have been once—and much against my will. It was about two weeks ago ; and one of the warmest days we had : and though the old people were longing to be in the open air, that cruel wretch had removed them to a smaller room !——And this is the same woman who is spoiling her grandchild by excess of fondness.”

During the above little narration I remarked that my aunt had thrown aside nearly all the affectation of her manner, and forgotten her “sesquiped—alia verba.”—“ Surely,”—thought I—“ she must be a woman of excellent heart !”——“ But how is Mrs. Bulleye in other particulars ?” I asked aloud.

“ You shall hear, nephew. You have seen yourself that she still lays claim to beauty—though much older than I am !” (my aunt made a slight mistake in chronology)—“ And besides, she is tyrannical to all but her darling ; and slanderous ; and so indelicate in her language that it is dangerous for any woman, who blushes, to be in her company.”

Here the carriage stopped at my uncle’s door, and broke off the conversation.—“ O ho !”——thought I, as I helped the lady from the steps—“ murder will out ;—my aunt is not quite so charitable as I thought her !”——and, so thinking, I offered my arm to my uncle’s wife with the reverence due from my uncle’s heir.

——Truly, Mr. Levis—to speak my mind freely—I think you have given yourself the lie. You said, in the last chapter but one, that your aunt was perfectly good-natured.——

O, pardon me, my Reader ! I did not say “ perfectly ;” I said she possessed “ an inexhaustible fund of good-nature.”

—Well, well ! we will not dispute about words :—but do her last remarks on Mrs. Bulleye savour of good-nature ? And moreover—did she not tread on your toes when the Foxes were wrangling ? What say you to that, sir ? *I say* your aunt must have loved slandering a little.—

And what of that, sweet sir ?—Take the word of a man of sixty :—A little love of slander and a great deal of good-nature are by no means incompatible. Many persons like pepper on their melons.

CHAPTER XIII.

How now ? What letter are you reading there ?

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

SING on, thou sweetest minstrel that ever woo'd the ear of listlessness ! Well do I love thy gentle strain, when the thoughtful twilight is fading into darkness, and fatigue weighs heavy on my senses. To me thy notes are never harsh ; for they tell of comfort and hospitality.—More welcome than the mellow flute at midnight ; more soothing than the ploughboy's whistle, when he homeward drives the lowing herds ; and more romantic than the chirp of crickets in a chimney-corner,—is thy voice—O thou copper tea-kettle in my aunt's parlour !

Fatigued by the company I had left, I threw myself upon the sofa the moment I returned home. It was the finest part of the evening—neither dark nor light—but just the time, when John, according to custom, brought in the little tea-kettle and set it on the hearth. So reclining at ease, in the most classical, graceful, luxurious, and meditative of attitudes, videlicet—upon my elbow,—at the most poetical, beautiful, agreeable, and meditative

of hours, that is to say—at twilight,—I cast a tender glance at the much loved copper, and apostrophized it as—You may smile, dear Reader ; but I am neither old bachelor nor Doctor Johnson, I assure you ; yet do I love to gaze upon the round, sleek sides of the polished boiler, as they reflect the coals of the three-legged chafing dish ; for they seem to me so good-natured, so jolly, so—so like the laughing and laughable belly of a turtle-fed alderman,—and then the serpent mouth appears to smile with so much satisfaction, as it sings its vesper hymn,—and that very hymn, as, in graceful curls of steam, it issues visible from that very mouth, charming both eye and ear, is so soothing ! O, my reader ! I can compare it to nothing so well as the sighing of the evening breeze through the long grass—or the murmur of a distant waterfall—or the buzzing of flies in a sugar-barrel. And as for the dear, fat, little copper kettle itself—what does it resemble so much as the Pythoness of old, on her tripod, singing oracles through the inspiration of vapour?—By the by, this proves that Solomon was correct in saying “there is nothing new under the sun ;” for the ancients must have been better acquainted with the properties of steam than ourselves, when they applied it to the purposes of divination.——

——Stop a minute, Mr. Levis ! The ancients never put a sixpence into my pocket ; so I shall not allow their claims to superiority to pass undisputed. You can never have been in one of our conventicles, or you would know that we preach and prophecy by steam as well as they.——

Well, well, my reader ! I merely threw out my remark as a hint to the Antiquarian Society. For though I should be sorry to have Mr. Watt convicted of larceny,—yet, as the whole world must be interested in an investigation of such importance, I am willing to have my private feelings disregarded. Nay—should not Sir Walter Scott, or any other member of the society, be inclined to profit

by my hint, I will myself investigate the matter in a work intituled "An Examination into the Antiquity of Steam-boats and Gas Lights."

However—I was apostrophizing the object of my admiration as you have read at the beginning of this chapter, when a smart tap upon the shoulder put to flight my enthusiasm, and set me upright on my feet. At the same time a voice, very different from that of the tea-kettle I assure you, announced my aunt.

"Here's an epistle endorsed with your direction, nephew Jeremy.—John, some lights here!"

What a charm the mere mention of a letter brings with it, when we are from home! Though caring little for the friends we have left behind us, yet there is, in a half-penny's worth of paper folded and sealed in a certain manner and directed in a hand we recognize, a kind of mystery, which causes the heart to throb with the mingled emotions of hope and fear. For who knows what may have happened in our absence? or what misfortune this comes to announce us? Perhaps a parent sick, or the greyhound stolen, or the baby dead, or Julia married: or it may be the herald of joyous news;—who knows but a fortune is left us, or the bitch has littered, or a wife has twins, or Julia is dead?

Imagine, then, my feelings as I recognized my mother's writing! To be sure, I cared nothing for the home of my infancy—nay, I disliked it; but then, I had left that home under circumstances so disgraceful, and had incurred the displeasure of an already angry father, and done violence to the feelings of a doting mother——The letter was a tacit reproach:—I blushed, and broke the seal.

Without troubling the reader with my mother's orthography and punctuation, I will give the "epistle" in her very words:—

Dear Jerry,

I take the opportunity to write you a few lines, hoping to find you well. We had a fine kick-up here about you, after you was found to be run away. Your father swore you should never set foot in his house again; and, when I told him it was enough to send the poor boy to destruction, he grew outrageous, and declared that when he or you was on his dying bed he'd forgive you, and not till then—which was being very unchristian-like you know. He even wanted to prevent me writing: but I got the paper and pens from Mrs. Handy, who begs me to send a great deal of love to you, and says it was a great shame, and nothing but Mr. Levis's cruelty that drove you from home. I think he was wrong too. She is growing old fast. I want you to buy me "Tom Jones," if you can get it cheap, and send it to the care of Meg. Dr. Pillule's wife says it's the best thing she ever read. You did not do your reputation any good, dear Jerry, by being with that naughty Dick Hazard. I told Mr. Levis it was only him that took Mrs. Maline's letter from the Post office; and so it has been proved. How glad I was you played that trick of the cradle upon her! all the village knew it, and said it was the wittiest thing that had ever been done:—you know no body likes Mrs. Maline. You don't know how anxious I was, till I heard where you was—O, Jerry, you'll never know what it is to be a mother!—but your father whistled, and said the next thing he expected to hear you was hung: but he's a nasty, unfeeling brute, though I say it—and so Mrs. Handy says. The whole village thinks you a great man since they've heard about that shocking murder; you haven't been out of their mouths since—and that's the way I knew you was at your uncle Jeremy's. Wasn't you afraid when the murderer leaned over you?—Mrs. Maline threw the cradle out of the window, and broke it all to-pieces. I wish she'd been in it—the ill-natured, ugly, spiteful, old thing!—I never saw any one in my life so mad as your

father was when he found his guineas gone. How could you be so wicked as to take them, Jerry? I never thought you could be so bad:—I'm sure it was all of that Dick Hazard; and so I told Mr. Levis; but he said that you had spoiled Dick, and not Dick you. Only think of that! But your father was always wrong about you. I should like you also to get me "Count Fathom." I have read the first volume, which the postman's wife lent me: it is so delightful!—send it also to Mrs. Handy's. I hope you will write to me often, and with best love to your uncle and aunt and all the family,

I remain

Your affectionate and dutiful

Mother,

MARY LEVIS.

P. S. Don't forget to tie the books up close; and direct them to the care of Mrs. Handy. I am in a very great hurry, and have so many things to say; but you must excuse haste. Be a good boy to your uncle; and who knows yet but you may one day be a comfort to your poor mother: he's very rich, and you must put up with his little queerities. Your father grows crosser and crosser every day; but it's a filthy bird that—the rest I wont mention—it's too indelicate—but it's about befouling its own nest; so I wont say any more at present. Don't forget my books, and excuse bad writing. M. L.

—"Very sensible advice that for my conduct as nephew! Thank you mother: I will follow it most closely."—and, as I made this resolution, I grasped the letter between the thumb and forefinger of each hand.

"Stop Jerry!" screamed my aunt, as she snatched the paper from its perilous situation, "don't tear it! I should like to read it—if it's from your mother."

"I shall be happy to let you see it, aunt; but, now I think of it, there is a passage which I did not exactly

make out. Permit me to read it over again, first." I approached the candle to aid me in the examination, and, not thinking it at all necessary that my aunt should see the part which was of most importance to myself, I suffered it to take fire.

"What a pity!" said my uncle's wife, as she brushed off the crisped edges of the scorched fragment. "You are a careless dog, nephew!"

"O, aunt," drawled I, "you have all the substance of it here. The rest was of no importance:—only a few compliments for you, kindnesses to me, best loves, and *et cæteras*!" It passed—the lady did not suspect me.

"Ah, nephew Jeremy!" sighed the good-natured creature, when she had finished reading, "you are now, I see by this—a houseless orphan!" She paused, folded carefully what remained of my mother's "epistle," laid it on the table, shook her head dolefully, and continued:—"Turned adrift by the fury of a relentless father; forced to seek your own maintenance, perhaps even an eleemosynary subsistence, amidst the buffetings of a pitiless world; exposed to the bleak winds of heaven, and—worse than ~~they~~—the savage heartlessness of unfeeling fellow man; you will be blown about by all the shifting vicissitudes of life; your virtue will be drenched in the pestilent waters of a sea of corruption; and you will, perhaps, terminate a miserable existence by a period equally distressful to humanity!"

Again my aunt paused to give effect to this masterly picture. She then removed her spectacles; wiped her streaming eyes; folded up the spectacles; put them in their case; and continued:—

"But fear not, poor houseless wanderer! Though the whole world frown upon thy helplessness; though thy friends drop from thee, as the leaves from a blighted tree; yet, whilst I have a house to live in, its roof shall shelter thee—the winds of Heaven shall blow over thee unharmed—the angry waves shall not dash against thy pillow—and thou shalt sleep secure, unhurt by the arrow

that flieth by day, and the pestilence that walketh in darkness!"—and the lady rose from her seat, fell upon the neck of her astonished nephew, and burst into tears.

O soothing Pity! blue-eyed daughter of Heaven! who is like to thee? At thy approach, Anguish creeps howling from the bed of sickness; at thy soft call, Hope comes, on angel's wing, to fan the fevered cheek; at thy sweet smile, Death veils his terrors from the eyes of his victim. Without thy tears, what balm could heal the wounds of affliction? Without thy voice, what tongue could change the purpose of Despair? Without thy touch, what hand would dry the eyes of the widow, or clothe the limbs of the desolate orphan?—

"God will reward you for it!" said I, as I buried my arms in the fat of my aunt's sides, and sobbed in concert on her neck. For why? The matter was good, though the manner was damnable.

And did I act the hypocrite?—No! My aunt wept through the force of her own eloquence—she could not help it: I wept, from the suggestions of prudence—because it was right. Mine then was the greater merit—and thus the matter ended.

CHAPTER XIV.

With us ther was a Doctour of Phisike ;
In all this world ne was ther non him like
To speke of phisike and of surgarie.
He knew the cause of every maladie,
Were it of cold, or hote, or moist, or drie,
And wher engendred, and of what humour :
He was a veray parfite practisour.

Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

It was about a week after the receipt of my mother's letter, that Uncle Jeremy sent for me to come to his apartment.

I found him engaged in close conversation with a gentleman in black, whose appearance was remarkable—too stern to be inviting, yet too noble to be termed forbidding. His person was tall and finely proportioned, and wanted but roundness to make it elegant. His countenance, strongly marked, showed a character of no common order :—The forehead was lofty, regular, and beautifully expanded from temple to temple,—so much so, that viewed obliquely, it seemed to arise in almost a right angle from the outer *canthus*.—Indeed,—if I may be indulged in that violence of expression which is finely characteristic of the writers of this “impassioned” age,—you fancied, when studying it intently, that the mind within, too strong for confinement, was bursting its disdained inclosures. Over the nose it was slightly wrinkled, by the contraction of the eyebrows in intense thought.—The eyes, of a pale blue, were full and well formed ; though, from the great projection of the *superciliary ridge*, they had the appearance of being hollow. Their habitual expression was stern ; yet relieved, in some measure, by

the peculiar shape of the chestnut-coloured brows, which rose to an angle in the centre, and then lessened so suddenly that they seemed, to an imaginative observer, to fade away rather than terminate. The nose was large, of the shape usually known as Roman, and slightly drooping over the upper lip. As to the lips,—they were rather thin; but very expressive: and yet it puzzled you to decide what their expression was exactly.—The satiric curve was there, however, and something too of the smile of humour.—Add two wrinkles—one running from the nostril to about a quarter of an inch below the mouth; the other from the angle of the chin (and a very manly chin it was too!) to the same extent above it—and you complete a face, of which the features, taken separately, were expressive, but together—were striking.

These particulars are not wholly the result of a first observation; for my uncle, the moment he heard my step, opened in usual style:—

“Hullo, boy! are you there? Come in, you puppy; and don’t stand dilly-dallying at the door! here’s your uncle, Doctor Tim!—Why! what does the man stare at? Come nearer, you lubber!—Well, Tim, isn’t he a damned good-looking fellow? Not quite stout enough; but just such another as I was at his age, heh Tim?—What think you of spreading plasters, you jackanapes? and mixing vomits? and applying clysters, heh? What say you to tying M.D. to your name, like brother Tim here? You can kill people then by the hundreds, and—blast you, keep off my toe!—and never be called to a reckoning for it:—fine sport that!—What say you, man? We’ve settled the matter between us, Tim and I, and only want your “yes.”—Why, what in the devil’s name does the fool gape at?”

And I was indeed “gaping,” as my uncle chose to call it; for the news came like a thunder-stroke. Not that I expected, or desired, to be maintained in idleness; but the fact is—it had not as yet occurred to me that I must

form some plan for a livelihood. Hitherto I had passed my time much to my satisfaction : and it was my nature to laugh to-day and care not for to-morrow. I looked at my uncle Jerry, and saw he was waxing impatient : I turned to my uncle 'Tim, and discovered a smile by no means flattering to my vanity.—Well, it is all one to me—thought I—what profession I follow ; so, "Uncle,"—I said aloud—"I am perfectly willing to adopt any plan of life you think best for me." I hit the nail right, then.

"Spoken like a man ! Curse me, but I thought you were a good enough fellow in the main, Jerry ! Only a little fond of dissipation or so—just like me when I was of your age !—Well, well ! boys will be boys, all the world over—heh, brother Tim ?"—and a smile, like a sunbeam, lighted up the rough features of the kind old man, as the recollections of his boyhood came thronging upon him : but, in an instant, a cloud of sadness threw its dark shadow over the brilliant track—and the sunbeam vanished. What wonder ?—he had known misfortune at an earlier age than mine. However, there is luckily some good in every thing :—The transient gloom which affected one uncle afforded an opportunity of speaking to the other.

"Jeremy," said the doctor, in a voice and manner that suited well his appearance, "your uncle has informed me of the circumstances, under which you are indebted to his protection. You have acted, sir, in a manner highly censurable in any young man, and especially in one with the abilities of which I am willing to believe you possessed. The only way to make up for the folly of such conduct is by a determination to act for the future as becomes a man : and such a deportment, sir, I shall expect, and will exact, if you put yourself under my instruction. You have heard the proposal of my brother. To it I have no objection, as it concerns myself ; but, as it regards your happiness, I think it my duty to discourage

you from the study of medicine.—I tell you, Jeremy, as an uncle—as a friend—you might better be a shoe-black—any thing, rather than a physician : and more, I assure you, with the voice of thirty years' experience, that were I to commence life anew, I would cleanse the streets of London before the stomachs of the sick.

“Of all professions, that of medicine is the most anxious, the most disgusting, the most thankless. Forced to humour the capricious, to soothe the irritable, to persuade the headstrong ; to mingle in scenes, which even familiarity cannot divest of their loathsomeness ; to feel the gnawing of anxiety, when fathers, husbands, and brothers confide their dearest interests to your skill—still more, when with the life of your patient your own reputation lies at stake—and then, when all is done that man can do, to have your services requited with a grudging hand, and unthankful heart,—such is the life of a physician ! Nay, even in the eyes of those, who should know how to appreciate your merits, you will find that the discharge of the pecuniary debt cancels all obligation. As if *money* could repay such services as ours ! Remember Jeremy, I speak of the better (would I could say the greater !) part of the profession : for as for those, whose only object is to earn a living, who would draw the last drop from the veins of their victim, could they but coin it into gold——Nephew ! a quack you shall not be ! I will bury you with this hand first !

“Believe me, this is no fanciful picture. If you have genius, if you be of an impatient temper, if your character be proud and finely sensitive, I warn you—study not medicine. Yet I repeat :—as far as concerns myself, I have no objections ; I am willing to instruct you : but weigh well what you do—lest you repent, when repentance will avail you nothing.”

“Damn my eyes, brother Tim !”—roared my uncle Jeremy, whose “cloud of sadness” had vanished before the wind of the doctor's eloquence as a cloud of dust before

the breath of Molly's dusting-rag—"What a talk you make about nothing! Curse me, if your preaching isn't like one of your doses; 'twould turn the stomach of a horse—if you could get him to swallow it. Why the devil can't you let the boy choose for himself, man?—Don't you mind him, Jerry: but take my advice, and study physic. There are hundreds in the profession who haven't half your brains; and they grow as rich as Jews. All you've to do is to keep clear of your dirty stuff yourself, and cram plenty of it down the guts of others, and they'll throw purse and all they have into your hands to get rid of it. I say—never mind your uncle's nonsense: only bleed, purge, starve, and give clysters in abundance, and you'll have your hands full;—for grown people love to have a nasty frolic now and then, as well as children to build mud-pies; and a doctor, like a duellist, is always respected according to the number that he kills.—"

"Yes, nephew," said my aunt, who had been standing behind us unperceived, "Mr. Levis has pictured a sad reality; for, owing to the perversity of human nature, we are never disposed to——"

"Hold your jaw, Polly Levis! What the devil do you know about it? Go tend to your own affairs, woman, and let the doctors alone!"

My aunt turned meekly round, as a dumpling in hot water; grumbled, no more than a hogshead when cursed for leaking; and waddled from the room, like a goose driven by grunts from a hog-pen. How differently would my mother have acted?

O female obedience! valuable in a mistress as pea-green eyes in a white rabbit, more beautiful in a wife than the scoured platters on a kitchen dresser,—more to be desired art thou than shrimp-sauce! yea, than much fine shrimp-sauce! sweeter too than currant-jelly and the currant-jelly bag!—Who, indeed, shall estimate thine excellence, obedience feminine? Thou needful utensil, for which we search in darkness and get *knocked on the head* for

our pains ! thou fine-whisked broom, which, used, must *raise a dust* at every move ! thou heavy charge in a rusty gun, that canst not perform thy office, without causing the piece to *kick* ! thou ill-tuned instrument, to touch whose jarring strings awaketh *discord* !—Thou concentrated essence of all excellencies ! Alas, that like all other things of good—thou art so rare !

“I say again, nephew”—continued my uncle—“don’t mind what that long-legged fool says : he’s a knowing dog, and wants to keep the bones for his own picking :—but don’t you mind him, Jerry—don’t you mind him—and I’ll warrant you a share. Not that I want to get rid of you, my lad ! don’t suppose that, you rascal ; for though boys are pretty expensive articles to keep, yet I would be willing to maintain you all my life—and afterwards too, for that matter : but every one ought to do something for himself, if it’s only to keep him out of harm’s way. Physic’s an honourable profession ; and damn me, if, with your stock of impudence, you don’t come off in the market as well as any of them !”

I had been staggered a little by the doctor’s description ; but as my uncle Jeremy was the last speaker—and as, moreover, his discourse was seasoned with damns enough to tickle the nicest palate—and as, therefore, I might lean to the side of Interest without the danger of being pulled back by Pleasure—and as it was my interest to side with my uncle Jeremy— ; therefore, I recovered my equilibrium ; and, without looking to see what was in my professional uncle’s scale, I leaped into that held out by the other. Of course, medicine proved but *dust* in the balance.

“I have made up my mind, uncle,” said I : “I will follow your counsel.”

“Spoken like a dutiful nephew, and a man of sense ! and curse me if you shall lose by it either with your old uncle !—You will make a pretty income for yourself too, if you’re as successful as Dr. Sober-chops here. —

What say you, grim Tim?"—added the jolly old man—giving the doctor a tremendous slap on the back.

"I say to yourself"—replied his brother with a smile—"you need not enforce your arguments with considerations so weighty; and to my nephew here, I have only to repeat my willingness to undertake his instruction, and my conviction that he will not thank me for it."—and extending his hand to me, the Doctor took up his hat to depart.

"Timothy, you're a damned blockhead!—What, you're not going already, brother Tim?"

"Why, brother Jeremy, how can you expect me to stay, if you make so hot a place of my back, and such a hell of my ears?—Nephew, I will give you a week longer to deliberate: and if you will bear in mind that in choosing a profession you determine, in a measure, the future success of your life—and consequently, your happiness or misery—you will make no hasty decision, I am sure."

"I feel grateful for your kindness, sir," I answered:—"but may I ask whether, if I pursue the study of physic, I am to live with you?"

"No! I'll be damned if you are!" roared my uncle Jeremy, throwing his crutch across the room—"Live with him!—nurse, hand me that crutch—live with him, sir!—Nephew, you're an ungrateful puppy.—Damn it! do you think there's no home to live in but his? did I ever tell you I was tired of you—say?—May I be damned if, while there's life left in this old carcase, you have any other home than mine!"—and again went the crutch to the other end of the room.

There was no affectation in all this:—the matter was good, and the manner was good.* So I squeezed the hard hand of the old man, till the tears streamed down his cheeks from pleasure and mine from sympathy.—"Psha!" muttered the doctor, stalking to the door. It was a vain attempt to hide his own emotion.

* Vid. *supra*—p. 148.

CHAPTER XV.

Ah ! je vous y prends donc, madame— *MOLIERE.—George Dandin.*
——addis cornua pauperi ! *HORAT.—Carm.*

FROM certain remarks of my uncle Jeremy's, given in the last chapter, the reader may suspect me of being not over correct in my habits. Now—I forewarn him, that, if on grounds so marshy he builds suspicions prejudicial to my character, his architecture will prove not a beam more stable, than if it were raised on—the firmest foundation. The fact is, that I indulged in all the dissipation to which youth and opportunity incited me : for, though my uncle was cautious of his money, my aunt was liberal ; and a certain accident opened her hand still wider.

As every new method of making money is a point added to the table of mental improvement, in this age of manufactures, when steam-boats, novels, and poems are but so many ways of raising the wind—the reader will pardon me if I go back a little to relate a discovery, whose rabdomanchial powers drew purse after purse from my aunt's pocket by merely pointing at her character.

It may be remembered, then, that on my arrival at my uncle's house I had stumbled upon a sort of cousin, Proxy by name. This Proxy seemed to be a regular visitor ; for I frequently met him in the drawing room, or on the stair-case, and sometimes even at the door of my aunt's private apartment,—yet, strange enough, never near my uncle. Now, as Mrs. Levis appeared to derive so much satisfaction from the gentleman's society, I could not conceive why Mr. Levis should not enjoy the same benefit :—

it was a piece of selfishness I could not analyze.—“ However”—asked I of myself—“ might not my aunt be pleased with a thing which would not tickle my uncle ?”—“ Certainly !”—answered the questioner—“ For as all tastes are not alike, as is shown by the axiom ; and moreover, by a postulate, the tastes of women frequently differ from those of men ; and furthermore, by the Second Chapter of the First Book,* the tastes of wives seldom agree with those of their husbands ;—Ergo—my uncle might have taken Mr. Proxy for a puppy. Q. E. D.”—and thus, with a shrug of the shoulders, the matter was always settled for the time being—for I hated trouble.

But one day—a day, which, though the date I have forgotten, will never be sponged from the slate of my memory, till the worm of corruption has battened on these withered cheeks, and these aged shanks are marrowless :—for on the night that preceded it the sun set, as though he were sinking beneath the horizon ; and when the moon arose, she rose, not with a visage chastely round, but—portent dire !—with horns ; and thrice the lightning flashed ; thrice, as I lay uneasy on my pillow, two bedbugs crept across the bridge of my nose without paying toll ; thrice too, a bobtail cur, with close cropped ears, and shaggy hide—having nine white hairs on his belly, eighteen yellow hairs on his back, and twenty-seven black between his fore legs—howled most piteously, and two members of the feline tribe chopped logic in the gutter.—One day, I repeat, happening to overhear the servant announce Mr. Proxy, it occurred to me that by suffering my eye to drop on a line with the key-hole I might bring the matter to a final decision. How such a suggestion presented itself I cannot imagine—except that having struck my forehead too forcibly the night before, in an

* Of course, when I internally demonstrated this problem, I had no idea of books and chapters. The reference is thus made for the convenience of the Reader.

attempt to collect my powers of thought, the organ of inquiry had become remarkably prominent. Well—I stole to my post with all the caution required by so delicate an enterprise ; when, just as, with knee bent and finger on lip, I was about applying my eye to the hole of the door, something whispered :—“ Shame Mr. Jeremy ! Eighteen years old, and guilty of peeping ? You mean, dirty fellow !—What is it to you that your aunt keeps cousin Proxy to herself ? O, for shame !”—I should certainly have risen from my humble posture ; but who can help his destiny ? I felt my forehead : the bump had not gone down : it would not go down : and so I could not get up. —“ Who knows”—thought I—“ but cousin Proxy may have some remedy for improving my aunt’s spirits ? Now, the same application might benefit my uncle—perhaps, cure him of his gout ! Concretions and chalkstones ! ’twill be the making of me !—A fig for my uncle’s grave digging ! I’ll turn quack at once—set up an infirmary—advertise to cure the gout in half an hour’s sitting—and, presto ! the whole world podagrical will be at my doors !”—Ghosts of Hippocrates, Galen, and Paracelsus ! could *ye* have resisted so strong a temptation ? What then did I ? I clapped my eye to the key-hole, and saw—not a lancet applied—no, my reader !—nor an injection administered—no !—nor an emetic in operation ; but patient Polly’s head reclining on the broad chest of doctor Proxy—even as a weary child rests on the breast of its mother, or as drops a modest violet when surcharged with rain—the only difference being, that the former is wholly supported by its parent, and the latter by its own stem ; whereas my aunt was neither the one nor the other : for her portly body sat upright on the sofa close to her cousin, whose left arm held her delicate head upon his breast in the manner I have mentioned, while her own right arm lay fondly on his neck. It was a scene of such harmony and family affection, that my very heart leapt to join it. Who indeed, that boasts the finer feelings of our nature, but

had been struck with the moral beauty—I had almost said, the moral grandeur of the group:—green Youth supporting yellow Age; the strong arm of Twenty-five pressing with ardour the flabby sides of Fifty; the rich, peach-like cheek of Mr. Proxy opposing its freshness to such a dried prune as Mrs. Levis's? As for me—either enthusiasm or the devil was in me; for, opening the door cautiously, I entered the room.

My aunt did not perceive me, till I was close upon her. But when she did——Reader, if you have ever seen a hen, when some thoughtless urchin hath come too near her tailless brood; or a goose, when an approaching wheel hath driven her from the cool luxury of a puddle; or listened to the soft repinings of a sow, when the hard hand of the swine-herd hath rapped her over the snout for guzzling too greedily—you may imagine how my aunt looked and spoke when she rose from the sofa and faced me: but—if you have never seen a hen, when some thoughtless urchin hath come too near her tailless brood; or a goose when an approaching wheel hath driven her from the cool luxury of a puddle; or listened to the soft repinings of a sow, when the hard hand of the swine-herd hath rapped her over the snout for guzzling too greedily—you can form no conception of the rage which ruffled up my aunt's feathers, gave majesty to her waddling step, and issued gruff-like from her squeaking mouth.

“What means this insolence, sir?”—Now my aunt acted like a fool; for had she shown her usual prudence, she would have kept her seat and temper, and thereby saved her credit—at least as far as the key-hole had not looked upon it: for I certainly had a right to enter the drawing room when I found the door-unlocked—“Cannot I receive a friend without being subjected to your rudeness? You'd better go down to the kitchen, sir, and learn manners!”

“I am sorry I have intruded, aunt; but I thought you had fainted on cousin Proxy's neck. If you don't wish

to be assisted, you should lock the door when the fit comes on."

My words were sufficient to irritate, without the sneer that accompanied them; but, with the sneer that accompanied them, they filled up the measure of the lady's wrath, and dyed a deeper red the roses on the cheeks of her cousin.

"Is this the reward of my kindness, you ungrateful wretch?"—said, or rather screamed, the former, while something like expression shone in her yellow eyes, and a dark red flush, like the light of the sun through a smoked glass, passed from the hills and valleys of her cheeks to settle in the peninsular tip of her nose—"Is this the reward of my kindness? to have you insult me in the presence of my friends? you! a poor vagabond, turned from your father's house, and taken in through mere charity!—Leave the room, sir! Depend upon it, your uncle shall know of this—Leave the room, I say, you sneering, impudent, low-bred—leave the room!—John, John!"

"O, don't trouble yourself to call John, my dear, sweet-tempered aunt; I can go without his help, I assure you. Only remember, sweet aunt, the next time you faint on a gentleman's neck, I will let my uncle know it first, and help you afterwards. Good b'y'e, cousin *doctor* Proxy!"—and looking with enough malice, I am sure, to qualify me for a teacher to Beelzebub, I left the room—closing the door with a deliberation that would have done me honour, had the parties within been asleep.

—Well—thought I—as I skipped along the entry, with the satisfaction one always feels after doing a good action,—it seems there is no ditch so green, but a high wind may ruffle its quiet surface—and that is something learned.—

But just as the aforesaid ditch, when the wind hath ceased to blow, recovers its serenity and hides again its modest face beneath its grass-green veil—so, ere five minutes had

elapsed, appeared, at the door of my apartment, all smiles and condescension, Mrs. Levis—my aunt, Mrs. Jeremy Levis!

“Jerry,” she said, extending her hand with what she meant for grace—and the intention is every thing—“I am distressed by the little disagreement which has occurred between persons so amicably disposed as you and myself; but you stimulated my irritability, nephew, by a waggishness of expression which I thought was seated on your laughing countenance, just as if you suspected any thing wrong—though such a thing, you know, were impossible between individuals so intimately connected as Mr. Proxy and myself. However, we must forgive and forget one another in this life, Jerry, that our heavenly father may forgive and forget us in the life to come.—By the by, you told me the other day that Hotspur wanted a new saddle:—there—that will buy you a handsome one. Only you need not mention any thing about Mr. Proxy to your uncle—”

“Certainly not, aunt!”

“For the old gentleman hates to be troubled with relations—”

“Certainly, aunt!”

“And it is our duty, Jerry, to liberate him from any inconvenience, as far as lies in our power.”

“Most certainly, aunt! Besides, it is nothing to me what you do with my cousin.”—And I tossed the purse from the left hand to the right, and from the right hand back again to the left.

“Mind me, Jerry, not that there is any thing underhand in the matter—bear it well in your remembrance, Jerry—but only not to trouble the old man. You understand me, nephew. And, do you hear? any time you want a few guineas or so, you know on whom to call.”

“Thank you, dear aunt. I could do any thing to oblige you now, you look so handsome.”—And, bowing with the respect which is ever due to the fair, I grasped

the purse tightly with one hand, and with the other opened the door.

"Jerry, Jerry!" said the flattered fair one, in a tone of gentle reproach—at the same time shaking one monitory finger, as parents do to a mischievous, clever child, while with another they beckon to their friends as if to say:—"Do look at the darling little rogue! how smart it is!"—"Jerry, you're a sly dog! Ah! you make a perfect fool of your doating aunt!"—and she courtesied from the room, with a smile on her visage like sunshine on a bleak hill in winter.

"O ho!" said I, when the sound of my aunt's retreating steps told me she was not detained at my keyhole by the force of example, "I see how it is—I see how it is!—relationship alone is not the charm for cousin Proxy; 'here is metal more attractive.'—Well!" I continued, as I spread the gold on my writing desk, "I admire his taste—two, four, six—certainly, he is a gentleman of fine discernment—eight, ten, twelve—of most excellent discrimination!—fourteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty—Hum! twenty!——I think Hotspur's saddle will do well enough with a little mending!"—and, as I concluded my soliloquy, I buttoned up my breeches' pocket.

CHAPTER XVI.

Will you deny now ?
Is't possible, that my deserts to you
Can lack persuasion ?

Twelfth Night.

I pray you be content ; 'tis but his humour.

Othello.

As LONG as the study of medicine was a novelty, I pursued it with ardour. Besides, there was something in the character of the doctor, which, if it did not win the heart, at least commanded attention, and to me was a source of never failing interest.

Though my observations on this point are not essential to the immediate purpose of the chapter, yet, as my uncle's character is not one of every day's finding, the reader perhaps may be pleased with an opportunity of indulging my pride without any discomfort to himself. If he will follow me then, I will trace out the simple lines of a sketch, which, if it have no other merit, shall at least be new.

Timothy Levis, Doctor of Medicine, was one of those rare beings, who, with qualities that should win them the highest station, sit contented in the lowest ; not from inertness ; but as one, who, reclined at ease, sees others in a race before him :—they toil, and sweat, and pant, each straining his utmost to surpass the rest, while he, ' good, easy man,' looks on with smiling eyes, cheers the foremost, or laughs at those who trip, without it ever occurring to him to run himself—though conscious of powers which would soon place him beyond every competitor. His father being a physician, physic offered itself to my

uncle as the most convenient of the three professions (as they are called—by way of *excellence*,). He soon became one of the most successful practitioners in London ; but not one of the most popular: for, being a man of liberal mind, he thought not to get the mastery of nature, but made himself her humble follower, never presuming to lead where obedience was all that was required. Hence, I say, my uncle, though successful, was not popular,—for there is some consolation in dying by the hands of art ; but to recover without her assistance is mortifying in the extreme ! This unpopularity was by no means lessened by a bluntness of manners, sprung of a self pride that would not bend to those little courtesies of life, which so gently, yet so effectually, open the way to confidence by winning first the heart, and which he unjustly confounded with the dirty favour-seeking practices so common with those of his profession. “ Well doctor ! ” said a patient, whom he was visiting for the first time, “ what think you is the matter with me ? ” “ The matter with you, sir ! ” answered my uncle, with a stare of the most unqualified contempt—“ You are cursedly lazy—that is all. Get up, sir ; mount a hard-trotting nag, and whip him smartly over the pavements ; and, my life on it, you will outride the distemper. It is sheer laziness, sir ! ” “ But, doctor,” whined the invalid, turning painfully under the weight of a dozen blankets, “ Every one tells me I’m sick.” “ Every one tells you a lie, then. I tell you, you are no more sick than I am.” “ Would not bleeding do me good, doctor ? ” “ Perhaps it might, were it applied to your brain ; but I follow no man’s prescriptions but mine own.” “ Or an emetic ? ” questioned the incorrigible patient. “ I think an emetic would be of eminent service ; don’t you doctor ? ” “ Doubtless ! ” answered my uncle, whose temper began to be ruffled, “ and so would a sugar-teat.” This was too much for even the sick man’s stupidity, and he told my uncle he should have no further oc-

casion for his services. "Very well!" said the doctor, in a tone of the most mortifying indifference; and turning to the nurse, and telling her she might buy the man a rattle to amuse him, he left the room without waiting for his fee. "You see," said he to me, when we were fairly in the street, "I drew you no false picture of the miseries of our profession. You will find, nephew, that half your patients are either fools or hypochondriacs; who take to bed by the impertinent advice of some old woman; lie there, till they have stunk themselves into a headache; send for a quack, who doses them within an inch of their graves; and when the doctor thinks proper to let them recover,—or rather, when they recover in spite of the doctor—they have had a surprising escape, forsooth, from the jaws of Death himself! Pah! I wish I had to begin life anew!" I said nothing in return; but could not help thinking, that, had my uncle gone rightly to work, he might have saved the man from some less honest member of the fraternity.

If ever man hated the profession by which he lived, it was my uncle Timothy. Indeed, many wondered why he practised it at all, inasmuch as his property was sufficient to maintain him in comfort: but, like his brothers, the doctor had no objections to wealth; yet, what was rather singular, he was too careless to secure its possession. He told me he had never sued a single individual; and I know from observation, that he was easily gulled by any rogue that chose to cheat him. Indeed, the facilities he afforded to enterprise were so well known, that tradesmen of every class would come to him without hesitation, and persuade him that he needed their services; and then they would prey upon the poor devil, till they were frightened themselves at their own impudence. He bought a house, shortly after I had commenced my studies; and, though it was new and sound, a mason actually made him believe that the roof wanted repairing; when the whole top of the building was removed to give place

to another, which leaked the second day after it was finished ! And will the reader believe me, that no man had ever a worse opinion of human probity than my uncle ? I can assure him that this is not the only instance I have known of men, that railed at the world with all the virulence of misanthropism and yet gave their lips the lie by trusting to its honour with all the simplicity of children.

However—to return to my uncle—He was a strict churchman, and, though far from a bigot, entertained the most insuperable dislike towards dissenters. He hardly treated them with decency. I remember being in the office, when a dissenting clergyman, came to consult my uncle. Without making any remark upon his case, the doctor sat down to write his prescription. While he was thus employed, a little dog, belonging to the coachman, and which the latter had taught to mimic humanity by walking on two legs, assuming the attitude of prayer, etc. made up to the parson on his hind-quarters, with his fore legs stretched out. The poor man, for the sake of saying something, innocently remarked, “Your dog preaches without a book, doctor !”.....“He is not the only puppy that does that, sir,”—drily observed my uncle, without discontinuing his occupation.

Among other eccentricities, my uncle Timothy was so regardless of the luxuries of life as to be without a carpet to his floor ; and yet, so particular in his dress that I never knew him to consult the glass without damning his tailor. However, as he was an absent man, he one day, as he rose from breakfast, thrust a napkin into his coat pocket, and walked out with its end besmeared with egg dangling to the calf of his leg. Astonished to find himself the ridicule of every one he met, the poor doctor was in such an agony of shame that he stopped a gentleman and demanded the cause. The gentleman told him ; when my uncle thrust his hand into his pocket, and, incautious of the very observation which had so

much annoyed him a minute before, drew out to its full extent a coarse, thick napkin, something like a tablecloth in size, and not remarkable for cleanness. Another man, in similar circumstances, would have laughed himself, and continued his way with composure; but my uncle, having an uncommon degree of sensitiveness, took to his heels, and, forgetting the striking nature of his figure, and the napkin which he still held in his hand, ran all the way homeward, followed by every little vagabond in the street. This incident, of course, soon took wind; and my uncle, overwhelmed with shame for so mere a trifle, locked himself up in his room for a week! which made the matter still more ridiculous. At the end of that time he rode out to visit his brother Jeremy. My aunt had just purchased a splendid silver pitcher at a price of sixty guineas; and the doctor, happening to ask for water, was served from the new pitcher of course. "Hum!" muttered the doctor, with much emphasis,—then asked with a sneer, "Don't you think, brother, clay would do as well as silver?"....."Yes," answered my uncle Jeremy, chuckling, "or coarse diaper as well as cambric—heh, brother?" The doctor showed symptoms of scarletina—"O, any thing for a shift!" he remarked, affecting to laugh it off. "Or a pocket handkerchief!" coolly rejoined my uncle Jeremy.

My uncle Timothy, though well read in medicine, was more inclined to the study of polite literature: and, as my own inclinations tended that way, I had sometimes art enough to make him forget his duty and change the usual lecture for some topic more interesting to us both. He was besides an elegant reader; and when I could engage him in his favourite Milton, or my favourite Shakespeare, I know no pleasure for which I would have bartered such entertainment.

One evening I had persuaded him to read for me the tragedy of *Coriolanus*:—for he had returned from an election, bursting with indignation at the meanness of

the candidates, and chancing to quote the language of so congenial a spirit, I had opened the book at the cited passage and begged him to continue. He could not have been in a fitter humour: and as I entertained for the mob a similar hatred—whence engendered I know not—we were employed much to our satisfaction, when to my mortification an odd looking gentleman entered the office, whom my uncle welcomed warmly by the name of “Catling.”

He was dressed in a full suit of black; of which the coat seemed to have been made for him in better days—at least, days when his *person* was in the plenitude of its greatness,—for now it flapped upon his shrunken flanks, as it might have done on the wooden post of a clothier’s horse. The tails of this ample cover reached to the middle of two things, which one might have taken for legs from their resemblance to those parts in a chicken—all there was of calf having receded upwards to settle in the thighs, which, sooth to say, were sadly in want of such additaments. Indeed,—to take a hint from the *ranatic* experiments of the most refined and ingenious Abbé Spallanzani—, had the peripatetic members of the fowl been thrust into a pair of breeches, with silk stockings, and its claws into shoes, Mr. Catling would have recognized a faithful miniature of his own lower extremities.

But, ludicrous as was the person of this gentleman, his countenance inspired me with feelings very far from merriment. It was that of a man still in the morning of life, and must once have been eminently handsome: but now it was remarkable for that peculiar emaciation which marks the slow but steady progress of decay.

There is something deeply interesting in the aspect of *consumption*,—sadly so, I grant; but melancholy has her pleasures, as well as gaiety; and they—and only they—know the ecstasy to which such pleasures may be carried who have felt as I have; who have centred all their

affections and desires, all their hopes, and all their fears, in one frail, perishable being; who have watched day and night over this cherished flower, this bud of a summer's morn, but to see it fade; who have wearied Heaven with prayers of agony, and not called down one drop of moisture on its withering leaves; who have writhed beneath that worst of tortures, the impotence of despair—and felt themselves blessed in their sufferings; who——

To those who have not known all this, as I have known it, my words may seem but folly: but they, who have tasted this bitter sweet; they, who have felt what it is to be preyed upon by this fever of the heart; they know—alas, too well they know!—how delicious is such misery.——

But the tale of my sorrow has its own proper time*—I will not anticipate it.

The first words of Mr. Catling, in answer to my uncle's salutation, were expressive of his admiration of the energy with which the latter read; and he sighed, poor man, as he seemed to draw a comparison between the doctor's lungs and his own. My uncle understood the sigh as I did: he took his friend's hand affectionately.

"Psha, my dear Catling! you must not give way to such feelings: your lungs might be as sound as mine, and even sounder, were you but as careless of them; but you are too fond a nurse and kill them by over-kindness. Why will you not do as I wish you? Let alone those drugs, which are destroying you by inches; break up that abstinence which is drying, drop by drop, the springs of your existence; and do as Nature would teach you, did you not shut your ears to her lessons; and my life—my reputation on the result!"

The invalid shook his head despondingly, and replied, in a voice which contrasted with my uncle's seemed its dying echo:—

* Vide Bk. V.

"Thanks for your advice; dear Levis. I know it comes from the heart; and gratefully, most gratefully, do I acknowledge its kindness: but forgive me if I do not follow it. I feel convinced that no man can judge of my case but my own self. Could I but make you feel as I do, there is no one, you are well aware, to whose skill I would trust so soon as yours,"—and, with a smile that made my very heart sick, he added—"It is hopeless, doctor; utterly hopeless!"

My uncle seemed vexed, as well as saddened. He was silent for some minutes, and then suddenly addressed the invalid in a tone different from his former.

"Tell me, Catling—what if a man were wandering by night, in a strange road, which he followed merely because he had read in some lying traveller that it would bring him to a certain object; and he had journeyed on that track, till he was convinced it was 'hopeless, utterly hopeless'; and some honest man, who had long been acquainted with those parts, were to tell him that the object he was seeking lay on a road to his right, much shorter and much easier of travel? Would you not say he was a fool, if he did not turn his horse's head and pursue the other course?"

"Yes, but——"

"Yes, but listen. You are he that is wandering a strange and a dark road; health is the object of your search; the books you read are the lying travellers that misdirect you; and I—if you will allow me to say it—I am the honest man, who, knowing by experience the road you should pursue, am willing to set you right. Are you not a fool then—pardon me, Catling—you know I am 'rude in speech'—Are you acting wisely, I say, in rejecting my advice, because it is mine?"

"O, you mistake me, doctor!"—exclaimed the invalid. "You do me wrong! If there be any man, whose skill——"

"Next to your favourite authors"—said my uncle with a smile—"that is what you would say:—If there be any man to whose skill, next to my favourite authors, I would

trust, it is you, dear Levis—is it not so, my friend?——
Come, I will yield place to them, every where if you please,
except—where they speak not common sense. I tell you,
Casting.”—he continued, relapsing into his usual warmth—
“the men whom you are blindly following are mere
‘men of science;’ men, who, become enamoured of
Learning, have repudiated Common Sense; men, who
despising their own eyesight—as too natural—have put on
glasses, through whose medium they see every thing dis-
coloured and distorted. ‘Much learning has made them
mad.’ Fools! they have the impudence to offer nature
a clyster-pipe and bid her purge herself of ill she never
dreamed of.—I tell you, sir, you are closing your eyes
against the light, to follow those men in darkness; and
they, blind guides, are leading you on the edge of a pre-
cipice, where the slip of a foot, the loosening of a pebble,
the crumbling of a bit of clay, will dash you down-
wards; and when a friend whispers you of your danger,
when he bids you use the sight that God has given you
and look around—will you close your ears also, and shove
him from you? Will you not even pause one moment, ere
a step be taken that can never be retraced?——Trust
me, dear George, I speak but for your good. I am vio-
lent I know; but I cannot help it—I cannot look on with
patience, when men turn their backs upon the right to
embrace the wrong; when they go miles out of the even
way to founder in a bog; when they quit the bridge
whereon they might travel dry shod, and in safety, to swim
miles of peril and—perhaps, sink at last.——Nature,
George, Nature is the best physician; and were men to
let alone the lancet and the drug-shop, and follow her
prescriptions, the names of dead men would not be so
frequent in the obituary——”

“Nor of quacks in the advertising column,”—said the
invalid with a languid smile. He evidently thought he
had discovered a flaw in the indictment, and thus hastened
to take advantage of it. “But, doctor—pardon the inter-

ruption—since you have introduced nature in the two, opposite characters of patient and physician, permit me to present her in her more usual dress. You assert that the multiplicity of our disorders is owing to a deviation from her rules, and would seem to insinuate that were we to be governed exclusively by her directions our ills would be but simple—as with the brute creation. These cases appear to me to be widely different; for the latter have a sure instinct to guide them; whereas nature has placed in our hands a better light—the light of reason—, wherewith she bids us explore for ourselves the cavern-depth of science: and when she expects us to search into its inmost recesses, would you have us cast down the torch at its very entrance, and, without so much as trying to remove the tangled bush and briar which obstruct it, tread out the friendly light—in order to trust an instinct which we cannot find? We should be truly in darkness then; and, calling in vain upon another guide, should stumble over the first stone, or be suffocated in the first swamp, that crossed our wayward path.”

My uncle's impatient temper had begun to chafe at the very commencement of this speech,—like a high mettled horse, which, feeling his own powers, snorts, and foams, and champs the bit, showing by his very restiveness the strength of the discipline which restrains him. The doctor wriggled in his chair, knocked with his right heel upon the floor, then frowned, then blew, then bit his thumb, then threw open his waistcoat as if straightened for room—but the laws of courtesy held him in check. At last he could stand it no longer, but started off at full gallop.

“My God, Catling! you are taking me where I had never myself an intention of going. I have no more notion of an instinct than you have, and am full as ready to keep Reason's lamp in flame—only I cannot conceive why we should spill the oil where it is not wanted.. What I meant and mean to say is—that we make our own ills by our own folly; and then, instead of consulting Nature

in the cure, instead of suffering her to right herself, and merely adding our help to get her on her own sure footing, we drive at once to the apothecary. This important dealer in poisons has read forsooth; and, judging similar diseases to require every where similar prescriptions, looks merely to banish the symptoms—as if they were the disease!—without it ever entering his crowded brain to remove the cause, and let the effect cease with its excitement. The art itself is not what I blame, but the professors of the art. They grope in that same cave of yours, and notwithstanding the torch which you have so kindly thrust into their hands—though I fear it too often burns but dimly—probably owing to the damps of the passage—they bring out, with the few bits of ore they have been able to rake from its corners, a load of dust and stones; and then, with their eyes bleared by cobwebs, they presume to tell us that their nasty rubbish is good for something. It is a pity they are not forced to prove its value on their own persons!—And for you, George; who have really the sense to distinguish the shallow pretensions of these would-be philosophers and real mountebanks, for you to suffer yourself to be bamboozled by their jugglery surprises me in the extreme. Here are you losing daily some portion of your precious strength—: You are in a debility, not in that decline which is known as consumption:—and when common sense would teach you, when she absolutely bawls in your ears, that a restorative course is necessary, and useful, practical knowledge points out what should constitute that course, you shake your head distrustfully, voluntarily let go the truth, and involve yourself in a labyrinth of error, that exhausts your strength in a manner that should arouse suspicion as to its cause—and yet, will you go on, day after day, and hour after hour, plunging still deeper and still deeper, till retrogression is almost impossible?—George Catling!” (here my uncle lowered his powerful voice, and grasped his friend’s emaciated hand,) “there is an

intimacy between us, such as is seldom found between men of ages so different as ours. Many years have passed, with many a change of weather, since first its threads were plaited, and not a damp bath come over it to rot the firmness of its union——George!—I admire you for your talents; I honour you for your virtues; and I love you for your heart—and yet, do you hesitate to trust your safety to my piloting? that too, when the vessel is so shattered it must go to wreck, if there be no hand to right her? George—I have, many and many a time, crossed that sea on which you are tossing; I know every rock and every shallow: I would lead you through the storm, I would guard you from every breaker, and send you refitted to weather bravely the rest of your voyage; and George——” The doctor, choking with emotion, rose abruptly and walked the room. There was a single tear which he tried to check, but could not; and as it trickled slowly down his cheek I almost fancied that it scalded. After he had taken one or two rapid turns, he suddenly paused, and resuming his appeal, relapsed at once into his usual manner; and thus, in a moment, undid by his violence all he had evidently effected by his short-lived tenderness. “Catling, I would not alarm you unseasonably; but I tell you frankly, unless you throw to the dogs those damnable drugs which are very vultures to your vitals, and burn those still more damnable books, you will not live long to be tormented by my entreaties—for I see, and grieve to see, they vex you. There is a wide breach in your constitution, George Catling, and with a madman’s hand you are pulling down stone after stone, till the whole wall shall totter and rush into one mass of ruin. Give yourself up to my care, and I do not overrate my powers when I tell you, that I will infuse new vigour into those feeble limbs, raise again that drooping form, and flush that ashy cheek with as clear a tint as—as that young girl’s who is ogling my nephew Jerry.”

I was sitting sideways in the window, so that, while I

seemed intent upon my book, I could in reality both see and hear all that was passing between the friends: but this strange comparison of my uncle's (—which was as characteristic of the man as ludicrous in the midst of his energy—) made me turn to the object of his reference; and I saw in an opposite window a remarkably pretty face, which I doubted not had been contemplating the beauty of my profile.

The moment my eyes met the lady's, she blushed—as was natural; I blushed too—as was to be expected (though I doubt whether the reasons were the same); and the blinds were instantly closed. I watched with great patience, and in a few moments was rewarded by seeing a pair of dark eyes sparkle through their openings. Again they were closed; and a third time my charmer deigned to solicit my notice, by a very innocent piece of coquetry:—she pretended to let the blinds escape her fingers, and they blew open: a very handsome form leaned out of the window, and a very round and very white arm drew the blinds slowly together: but, as they were about to shut in the fair prospect, a naughty wind blew them back again. Poor lady! imagine her confusion at this fourth exposure! She blushed to the eyes, and again drew them to in a pretty pet, which made me notice a pair of pouting lips—so ripe! and so juicy!—ah!—The devil of impudence never yet deserted me when a pretty woman was in reach of his tail, and, on his suggestion that I might lose the chance if I were not prompt, I kissed my hand with my best grace. Blessings on my lady's gentle heart! she smiled, sweet dove, actually smiled! and the blinds were closed—not to be reopened.

I was about to wrap myself in the most agreeable meditations, when a loud oath made me start from my position:—it was the first I had heard from the lips of my uncle Timothy, impatient as he was. I turned round. His friend had gone; and he was walking with rapid

strides the length of the apartment, with his head depressed, his brows contracted, and the thumb of his right hand between his teeth. He stopped at the noise I made, and (without raising his eyes) threw himself on a chair beside me, and muttered as if in soliloquy—while at each pause he beat the floor with his foot—“What an old fool I am!——Spoiling every thing by my cursed roughness!——I fear I have hurt his feelings grievously!——” and again he gnawed his thumb, till I fancied I could see the blood start from the nail.

My surprise was increased to such a pitch that I was on the point of asking the reason of his conduct, when he turned suddenly about, and explained it of his own accord.

“You are astonished no doubt, nephew, at the familiarity existing between a man of Mr. Catling’s age and myself, who am old enough to be his father. Listen then, and your astonishment will cease:—

CHAPTER XVII.

Improbe amor! quid non mortalia pectora cogis!

VIRG.—ÆN.

And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep?

GOLDSMITH.

THIRTY years ago—said my uncle—I was not the old man I am now, as you will have no difficulty in believing. Of course, I had my passions, like all other men; and like all other men I fed them, till they scorched me, Jerry—and I yet may tell the scars of their burning. I had just entered life under the most favourable auspices: I was successful in the practice of my profession; and, fortune

throwing a few cases in my way that raised my reputation to a high pitch, every body courted me, my practice became extensive, and, as I was remarkably temperate in my habits, my income which was very considerable doubled yearly—so that I began to think of settling myself in marriage. At this time, then, I was called to the house of a gentleman whose daughter had injured herself by a fall.

Catharine Aston was, of all women, the most likely to captivate a man of my character. She was the proudest being it has ever been my fate to know—as proud as woman can be without losing the softness of her sex. Yet this pride was not the pride of birth, though her descent was more honourable than our own, Jerry—nor the pride of beauty, though her's was peerless—nor the pride of talents, though they were of the first order; but the pride of moral purity—the pride of a soul which spurned at the very least of those meannesses by which her sex are too often disgraced. Consequent on this was a total want of affectation; a sensitiveness almost sickly, and which, of itself, had been sufficient to enslave one who was troubled with that quality to the excess that I am; and a reserve that was ever attractive to me in woman: but another consequent of this pride, and one which often stood in the light of her brightest merits, was an obstinacy almost insuperable. It was indeed her greatest fault. But her beauty, Jerry!—A form such as poets gave to the wife of Jove, but with more of feminine softness; a head that Raphael would have sighed to imitate, and sighing loved; a forehead high and queenly; an eye, whose habitual expression was pensive even to melancholy, but which, when she spoke, flashed forth all the workings of her noble heart—so beautifully! O, Jerry, had you seen her eye when the lightning of disdain was gleaming there—imperiously bright, you had trembled and adored! Her nose too was finely formed; so slightly aquiline as not to hurt the contour of the full face, while it added to the profile an aris-

ocratic look that suited her haughty figure. And her mouth——” My uncle’s emotion overcame him;—he grasped my hand till the bones ached; and his own noble countenance spoke so eloquently, that I could not help thinking how meet a lover he must have been for such a woman as Catharine Aston. The touch of my hand seemed to recall him; for he instantly withdrew his grasp, and, in great confusion, muttered something very like an oath. After a few moments he resumed his story in a calmer tone.—“You must smile, nephew, at the transports of a man of my age in retracing the picture of his youthful loves; but I have my weaknesses as well as others. I will add but one touch to my portrait, and in the colouring of your favourite:—

Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low; an excellent thing in woman.*

Now tell me, could I be indifferent to such a woman? I saw, Jerry, and worshipped.”——Here I whispered to myself:—and could I meet with such another, I too would see and worship.——“But my love——continued the doctor——was not the impression of a first visit, I was struck with her beauty, it is true; but I might have forgotten that: but when, on a second, on a third, on repeated visits; when her father, who had conceived an affection for me, invited me to come as a friend; then, when I learned her whole soul from lips and eyes that knew not how to deceive, then I saw—and loved.

From that time a change took place in my habits. Those accomplishments which I had hitherto neglected, I now cultivated with ardour:—I studied music and drawing, because Catharine was fond of both; I learned dancing and fencing, to give gracefulness to my person: in fine, I left nothing unattempted to win her affection—and I

* “Ever soft, gentle, and low.”—The Doctor must have forgotten what he had just said of her imperious character. O this Love!—the same bandage that blinds his little eyes extends its thick folds very conveniently, over his delicate ears.

was successful. What need of words? I asked her hand of her father, and he, knowing that my prospects in life were good, and learning that my birth and character were unexceptionable, gave his consent. The day was appointed for the marriage.

About a year before this I had formed an acquaintance with a gentleman of the name of Catling, who was a surgeon and attended lectures at the same hospital with myself. He was a man of polished manners, and the most insinuating address; and, being moreover a witty companion, he succeeded in attaching me to himself; and we became sworn friends. I never told him of my love for Catharine till the day of our engagement,—not through jealousy—at least, if such feeling did exist, I nourished it unknown to myself—, but Catling was a libertine, a professed scorner of female virtue, and had often openly boasted his power to seduce any woman on the face of the earth. I therefore felt it would be an insult to Catharine's purity to be even glanced upon by eyes so licentious. But now, that I was to be wedded to her, I could no longer defer the introduction. I led him to her—I watched his behaviour with the most gnawing anxiety. Had he looked upon her as he did on other women—had my friend, my almost brother, ventured a single smile, a single glance of his damned lust—I had struck him dead at her feet. For I loved as never man yet loved; my passion was idolatry; and often did Catharine shudder at its violence. This may seem to you, Jeremy, who are yet too young to have known the tortures of that delicious madness—this may seem to you but the ravings of romance: but remember, I was a man of fierce passions; my affections had never been blunted by the usual dissipation of youth, and now, that they had found an object on which to exhaust themselves, they raged with all the fury of enthusiasm. May you never know such love!" My uncle shuddered, passed his hand across his eyes, as if to shut out some object that pained them; and conti-

rued—"Had I seen, I say, the least symptom of disrespect on the part of Mr. Catling, my rage had known no bounds: what then was my delight, when I saw these eyes, which had never looked on woman except with contempt, or worse—with lust, paying mute reverence to the idol of my own worship? It was proportioned to my fears, and I could have hugged him in the ecstasy of the moment. Fool, fool that I was! I did not see that I had turned from the prospect of my safety, to welcome—my ruin!————

My transports, now that I had found a friend to share them, became more calm. The marriage was to take place in three months; and Catling had consented to be my groomsman. Not a day passed but we spent some time together in the company of my beloved: no little party of pleasure was formed in which Catling was not included; and when the night came on, and my friend and I had retired to our own room (for we lived together), I delighted to hear the praises of my betrothed from lips which had hitherto spoken of the sex only to defame it, and rallied him on the change of his sentiments—when he would sigh, and say nothing.—Now that all is past, I wonder at my own blindness.

Two of the months passed swiftly on, winged by pleasure, and but one remained ere my happiness could be completed. I now began to notice a change in my Catharine's deportment. She still welcomed me with a smile; but it was not the same smile it had been—I thought it seemed constrained: often too, in the midst of my most passionate professions, she would be subject to fits of sadness; and when I asked the cause she would start, turn pale, and with a sickly laugh endeavour to be mirthful. Her parents too observed the change, and, as she evidently drooped, became alarmed for her health,—for they were far from suspecting the real cause. I too assigned a like reason for what I saw: but, when I would confide my sorrow to the breast of my friend, he always

begged me to desist, which I attributed to the warmth of a friendship that feared to distress me. At certain times, however, dreadful suspicions would cross my brain; and though I endeavoured to disperse them, as unworthy of my love, their gloomy shadows would invariably return, and cast a damp upon my spirits which Catharine trembled to observe. But when, a week before the marriage day, Catling advised me to provide another groomsman, as he himself was obliged to attend a sick relative at some distance from the city—when he actually departed, then I became fearfully awake to my situation, and resolved to come to an explanation with my mistress.

The family had been residing for some weeks at a country seat, near a little village, a few miles from the metropolis; and it was my custom to visit them every day at noon and return by night. On the evening of my friend's departure, Catharine and I had set out with the intention of walking to the village; but feeling herself fatigued, when a short distance from the house, my bride sat down upon a little grassy knoll, and I threw myself at her feet. Here, as I looked upon the form I prized so dearly, and those pale and beautiful features, which the softening light of a summer's moon made almost unearthly in their eminence, I forgot my suspicions, my resolutions, every thing but the idea of present happiness. I did not heed that the face on which I gazed so fondly was pale and averted; I did not heed that the small hand, which lay folded in both of mine, was cold and trembled at my pressure; I thought but of the bliss that should be mine, when I held by the laws of God and man the one being whom I idolized—her whom I had wooed and won—my own, own Catharine—, and in all the eloquence of passion I poured forth the full tide of my hopes and wishes. I spoke with rapture of the day that should make us one; I traced out our future prospects in the brilliant colours of a youthful and ardent imagination; but as I waited in silence to catch the murmur of her ap-

probation, as I watched for the reward of one approving smile, I saw her shudder, and tears tremble on the lashes of her half-closed eyes. I rose, and, seating myself by her side, put my arm gently around her.

"Catharine,"—said I—"dear Catharine, do you already repent of your vows?—Speak to me, dearest; are you not happy?"

"Yes, yes!"—she murmured faintly—"I am very—very—happy,"—and the hot tears fell fast upon my hand. The dreams of happiness were gone, and my slumbering suspicions awoke with freshened vigour. It was some minutes before I could collect myself; but when I did, I remembered my resolve.

"Catharine,"—I said, while my voice trembled in despite of my utmost efforts to calm it—"Why is this? Are you not well, love? Or—does it grieve you to be reminded of your vows?—Speak, Catharine! say but the word, and if it be necessary to your comfort I will relinquish all the hopes I have cherished.—Though the price of the purchase should be my life, I would pay it gladly to buy you peace."

It must have been much indeed, that had tortured tears from a girl of her proud spirit; for, at my last words, she withdrew the hand I still held, and, while her eye and cheek burned beautiful with indignation, said (well do I remember the voice!):—

"Your suspicions are as injurious to my honour, as unworthy of your own! What cause have I ever given you to suspect me so light of word?—It is true, you have seen my spirits droop, and my health fade, day after day; but I have made it no plea to break my troth!—I am indeed unhappy, Mr. Levis—most unhappy: ask me not why; it would only distress you to learn: but be assured, no power can make me retract the faith I have plighted, save Death, or—yourself."

The melancholy sweetness, and even tenderness, with which the last words were uttered, might have brought

me to her feet at once ; but my suspicions grew black as night at the confession of her unhappiness ; and the name by which she had addressed me—" Mr. Levis"—so cold and distant—stung me to the quick.

" There was a time,"—said I, with bitterness—" when Miss Aston's sorrows, as well as Miss Aston's joys, were confided to the honour of the man she had chosen. That time has passed ; that man is no longer confided in ; and Miss Aston now seeks consolation in the friendship of another.—Yes, madam !"—I added, springing from the ground ; for my fury was now ungovernable—" my eyes, thank God ! are at last opened ;—George Catling"—the name almost choked me—" my friend, my honest friend, George Catling—declined to be assistant at a bridal, where he had hopes of acting as—principal !"—and, as with closed teeth, and the sneer of a devil, I forced the last word, I sought to rush from her presence. But the poor girl clasped my arm :—the pride, the indignation, the scorn, which had glowed triumphant in her noble features at the commencement of my mad reproaches, was now utterly gone, and pale with agony she gasped for utterance ;—she could but articulate—" George"—. At that hated name I flung her from me ; I forgot the place, the hour in which I was leaving her so unprotected ; I had but one thought—that of flying from a scene that tortured me—, and I ran on, madman as I was, without knowing whither I would turn my footsteps. Once I heard her cry :—" Stay ! hear me ! Levis !—dear Levis !" but I covered my ears with my hands that I might not hear the sound. On I ran, with the speed of lightning, till I found myself at the door of Mr. Aston's stable. The groom was saddling my horse (for it was the usual hour of my departure). With that strange sort of action, both of mind and body, which I have seen exerted by somnambulists, I bade the fellow be quick, and when I saw his fingers trembled too much to do their office, I pushed the staring fool aside, girthed the animal

myself, and springing on his back never spared whip or spur till I found myself at my own door. With a still dreamy consciousness, I alighted; I even deliberately fastened my horse to the post; and entered the house. The moment I had passed the threshold my senses forsook me, and I fell lifeless on the floor.

When I recovered, I found myself on my bed, with a physician of my acquaintance on one side and my servant on the other. My clothes were covered with blood; for my frame, which in my youth was very different from what it is now, had been too feeble to stand the violence of my smothered emotions and I had broken a blood vessel. The first use I made of my senses was to request to be left alone. My passion had destroyed itself by its own violence, and I now examined my conduct with deliberation, if not with calmness. I found that I had acted like a fool and madman, and had insulted my mistress without provocation; that I had distorted her very words into vile shapes to suit my own diseased imagination. I persuaded myself that there was not the smallest spot for suspicion to rest upon.—Might not—I asked—might not the very agony she seemed to suffer, have been caused by the injustice, and not the justice of my reproaches? Might she not have meant to convince me of that injustice, when she cried after me to *stay* and *hear* her, and appealed to me as her “dear Levis?” yes—as her “dear Levis?”—Thus I reasoned myself into a belief of my own folly, and, as my self-examination brought to mind the incidents of the late scene, I remembered with horror the situation in which I had left my injured bride. Without regarding my weakness, I sprang from the bed and rang the bell. “Smith!” said I, when my servant came in, evidently alarmed,—“take horse instantly, and ride to Mr. Aston’s. Ask how the young lady, his daughter, is.—Spare neither whip nor spur, but bring me back word as if your life depended on it; and I’ll make that guinea double, treble, any thing—Go!” I could not sleep

till the man returned, which was at day-break. He told me, with some confusion in his manner—which, though I saw it, did not strike me at the time—that he had found Miss Aston in very good health, saving that she was troubled with a slight cold which she had caught that evening. This intelligence, which I afterwards learned had been dictated by the man's love for me, removed my fear; and with a reverse of feeling, which, if you live long enough, my nephew, you will find to be not uncommon in such cases, I even accused my mistress of indifference. However, I resolved to make my peace with her as soon as my health should permit me to stir out.

On the next day then, finding myself sufficiently recovered, I rode to her house.—Most of the windows were closed, no one seemed to be stirring (though it was mid-day), and there was a strange silence prevailing. My heart took the alarm—I sprang from my horse, and rushed into the house. I met Mr. Aston on the staircase. He started, and seemed displeased. ‘How? O, how is Catharine?’ was the question that sprang to my trembling lips. Mr. Aston stared, as if surprised:—“I thought you knew, sir. Look there!” I followed the direction of his finger, threw open a door—and there lay my bride in the delirium of a fever! Scarcely less delirious myself, I sprang to her side, and usurped the place of the attending physician. For two days and two nights I watched incessantly—I refused all nourishment—I thought not of rest; but kneeling by the bedside of the sufferer, I listened to her ravings, and it was with a feeling even of ecstasy that I heard her—as she talked of that unhappy scene which was the constant theme of her delirium—call upon *my* name and not on Catling's. The fever yielded; and on the third morning Catharine turned to me her languid eyes, and with a smile of forgiveness, that repaid me for all my sufferings, placed her hand in mine. I kissed the poor thin fingers, and leaning over the pale face of my betrothed, ventured to take

the seal of my forgiveness from her lips. Nor did she turn away ; but murmured—, “ And you will never—never more offend, dear Levis ? ” “ Never, dearest ! ”—and I repeated the kiss ; and—and—was it a weakness, Jerry ?—and wept.”

My uncle rose much agitated, or, it may have been, confused. After he had walked once or twice across the room, he resumed his seat, and continued.

“ I dilate too much perhaps upon the record of my youthful feelings : but you will one day, nephew, have your own tale to tell, and you will then know—and only then—how fondly the heart clings to the remembrance of such scenes, and how difficult a thing it is to untwist its firm, though delicate tendrils :—to snap them were impossible !

Catharine slowly recovered ; and with her health revived, or seemed to revive, all her tenderness. Alas ! it was but the fitful flashing of a spent lamp ; which cheered me by the very blaze whose flickering announced its dying struggles. On the evening in which she had quitted her apartment for the first time, I was walking with her on the piazza, when I took occasion to whisper ;—

“ And when shall our bridal be, love ? ”

I could feel her tremble on my arm, as she answered in a voice more sad than tender :—

“ Why need you ask, when it rests with yourself to say ? Can I refuse any thing to make him happy who has done so much for me ? ”

I awoke at once from my blissful dream. And so it was mere gratitude that had deceived Catharine, as well as myself, with the semblance of affection, and I was indeed no longer loved !—and a sickness came over me, that I thought I should faint. The noble girl saw the convulsion which shook me, and with a magnanimity peculiar to herself—or rather, with that pride of honour which so eminently distinguished her—determined to

sacrifice her own peace to procure my repose. She laid her hand upon my arm :—

“ Let our marriage be to-morrow ! ”—she said—“ I wish it, Levis—indeed I do.”

I was well aware of the motives which had dictated this proposal : yet, proud as I was, I did not hesitate to take advantage of it; for Hope was knocking at my heart, and whispered that when Catharine was once mine, her own high sense of duty, joined to my endearments, would oblige her to love me, and I yet might be happy ;—and with this fond idea I tried to cloak my selfishness from my own eyes. Believe me, nephew, this is the greatest meanness of which I have ever been guilty.—But Hope is a double-dealer, and often plunges us deeper into difficulties, by pretending to take us out of them. She stands on the side of a marsh, and beckons to us to come over, and when we are in the middle, and handsomely mired, laughs—and leaves us to crawl out at our leisure.—

It is one of the inconsistencies of our nature, Jerry, that we love to linger on the story of our griefs, and *shudder while relating* :—It is as I have known it in our bodily ills, where we press, again and again, the sore that tortures us, as if we would be certain of the exact nature of the pangs we suffer. What need of words? The morning of our marriage came, and found me anxious, because Catharine was sad. On our way to the village church, I vainly endeavoured to subdue my own uneasy thoughts by endearments to my bride : but they would not down ; for Catharine grew sadder and sadder in spite of the efforts which I saw she made to please me ; and when I assisted her from the carriage, the poor girl shuddered so she could scarcely retain her footing.

The ceremony commenced : it came to the exchange of the ring :—Catharine turned to face me ; but, as she turned, she fixed her eyes upon one of the windows, became deadly pale, and fell senseless into the arms of her

mother. At this sight I groaned aloud, and frantic with jealousy rushed through the crowd and gained the door. Great God! there stood Catling himself! I sprang upon him, called him "Traitor!" "Villain!" and grasped him by the throat. He was naturally a much stronger man than myself; but rage had nerved me with a giant's force, and guilty terror palsied his efforts. Our struggle was fearful. The blood gushed violently from his nostrils,—and I believe I should never have relaxed my grasp till life in him was extinct; but he stumbled over a grave, struck his head upon the sharp edge of an adjoining tomb-stone, and fell senseless on the green sod. The people, who had left the church in time to witness but not prevent this sacrilege, were so horror-struck that they never offered to arrest me, and I ran through the village, my hands still clenched as in the struggle, nor stopped till compelled by mere exhaustion. It was then I heard footsteps in pursuit of me, and my name shouted in a voice I knew. It was my servant Smith, who had been present at the ceremony. I bade him follow, and proceeded rapidly to the house; which I found, as I expected, deserted by all but the cooks, who were busy with the marriage dinner. Well do I remember with what stern delight I looked upon their idle preparations, and muttered to myself, "'Tis all for naught!"—I ordered Smith to saddle both my horses, while I changed my dress. I then sent him, with one of the animals, back to the village, to await such information relative to the affray as might be of importance; while I myself mounted the other, bade farewell for ever to the house I was leaving, and set off at full speed for the city.

I mention these particulars with so much minuteness, because my coolness on that occasion—though it may be to you a matter of astonishment—was actually a severe proof of the awful intensity of my feelings.—There were two circumstances, however, which fully betrayed the state of mind under which I was labouring at the time.

When I paused in my flight from the church, I sat down for a few minutes to rest myself. It happened to be on the very spot, where the first rupture had taken place between Catharine and myself. I looked at my right hand, which I still fancied round the neck of my rival: a single drop of blood had fallen on it. I plucked a tuft of grass and wiped off the stain, and burst into a laugh so wild and fearful, that it sounded strange even to my own ears.—Again:—when at Mr. Aston's my servant came to tell me the horses were ready, I spread my wedding suit before him and, pointing to the many spots of blood upon it, asked him if he did not like the contrast of the colours. The poor fellow was so horror-struck that he fell upon his knees, and, with tears in his eyes, besought me not to "look so frightful!" With these two exceptions, I was as collected—in my deportment—as I am now.

I will not trouble you, Jeremy, with a description of my sufferings on the night of that eventful day; not only because the task were difficult, but because your own imagination, unknowing though it is of misery, can paint them in colours sufficiently powerful.—The next morning Smith returned from the village. He informed me that Catling's injury, though severe, had been pronounced not dangerous, and that therefore I ran no risk of being disturbed. Of Miss Aston he said he could learn nothing; with which answer I was forced to content myself, though I believed at the time it was dictated solely by his regard for me.

A week from that day I was in Paris. There I spent a year, endeavouring, and endeavouring in vain, to divert by dissipation the grief that preyed upon my vitals. At the end of that time I received this singular epistle."—Here my uncle rose, and took from a private drawer of his writing desk a letter, which, to judge from the variety of the folds that marked it, had been read more than once.—"Read it aloud, nephew," said the doctor, as he handed it to me,—"*I think—I should like to hear it once more.*"

Sir,

When a mother appeals to the generosity of the man who has so deeply injured her in the person of her only daughter, the motives to so strange a step must be very powerful. That daughter, sir, is dying; and it rests with yourself to save her from an early grave. From your behaviour on that unhappy day, which was so near uniting you for ever with my Catharine, I should judge you no stranger to the mutual affection subsisting between her, and your former friend, Mr. Catling. You will, therefore, not be surprised to learn that the wasting of her health is owing solely to that attachment: for the unfortunate girl, who with her mother's person inherits to the full her father's foolish pride, resists all my importunities as well as those of her lover; and declares that, as she has plighted her troth to you, it is only you that can release her from the engagement. It was therefore my wish, sir, that Mr. Aston should write to you and demand a formal renouncement of your claims to Catharine; but he solemnly swore he would not stoop to such an act, were it even to save his daughter's life! Why he should consider it *stooping*, to demand of you the surrender of what is no longer your own—for you must be aware, sir, that your conduct has cancelled all right whatever to my daughter's hand—I cannot conceive. However, he is obstinate and will not take my advice; and I am therefore necessitated to transgress that delicacy which is the proud distinction of my sex, and appeal to you myself: in doing which, I am convinced, sir, that when you consider there can be no hope on your part of regaining the heart you have forfeited by your own misconduct, you will not hesitate to liberate my daughter from the unfortunate engagement which she fancies so binding upon her. Should you comply, sir, with my demand—as I cannot doubt you will—you will be careful not to inform my daughter of the step I have taken; for, so ridiculous is the excess of her spirit, that I am con-

vinced she had rather die than owe her life to what she strangely imagines a breach of honour.

Sir,

Yr. obedient servt.

CLARISSA ASTON.

"It is written with a most cruel disregard of your feelings, uncle,"—I remarked, as I returned this curious letter to the doctor—"I should judge it to be the production of a very weak, narrow-minded, and pedantic woman."

"You judge rightly"—said my uncle—; "and my first emotions on reading it were those of indignation. But when I reflected on the magnanimity of the noble Catharine, and the sufferings she was enduring rather than violate an engagement, such as most of her sex would have considered far from binding, they yielded to those of admiration and pity; and I resolved she should be happy, as far as her happiness depended on me.

Under the influence of these feelings, I sat down and addressed her a letter; but, as I wrote from the heart, it was too tender—and so I tore it up: for well I knew it would chafe her to the soul, to find herself indebted to the compassion of one lover for her happiness with another. I therefore affected indifference, which I knew would produce the end I desired, in two ways;—by making her believe that the thought of her marriage with Catling was no longer painful to me, and by irritating her self-love. I wrote in these words:—Madam—After the unpleasant circumstances which have taken place between us, you can have no doubt that it will be for the happiness of both parties to drop all further connexion. Therefore, while I regret that I should have given a moment's uneasiness to a lady I so highly respect as Miss Aston, I feel it my duty to resign any claims which might be founded on the declaration she once did me the honour to make. With sincere esteem, and the best wishes for

your happiness, I have the honour to be, madam, your obedient servant.—

After I had despatched this letter, which I acknowledge was not written without a struggle, I felt so satisfied with myself, that I began to imagine my peace was returning. I was soon undeceived. Often in the lone night, when I lay tossing on my pillow, the image of Catharine Aston would come before me, as the wife of the man who had so bitterly insulted my friendship. In vain would I close my eyes, in the poor hope of shutting out the phantom ; in vain would I call up every ludicrous fancy to assist me : the horrid mockery would return, and in the darkness of the night blast the sight I did not exercise. I would see the being I had once loved so fondly, her whom I still loved, smiling at the endearments of the man I most hated ; I would see her leaning on his false breast, as she never yet had leaned on mine ; and his licentious eyes gloating on hers, as mine had never dared—even in their fondest hour ; I would see his damned fingers paddling with the beautiful neck I had thought it profanation even to dream of ; and his wanton—hellish lips glued to the pure mouth where my own kiss had once rested ; and worse—O, worse !—I thought I should go mad !—

Seeing that my only chance of relief was to be looked for in time and change of scene, I forsook that dissipated course of life to which my disposition was so averse, and commenced the tour of Europe.—For five years I remained on the continent ; during which time I gradually recovered my serenity : when finding that the state of my finances made it necessary for me to resume my business, and, moreover, feeling a strong desire to revisit my native country, I returned to England ; and settling myself in this city, commenced again the practice of my profession.

One day happening to be in the shop of a pastry-cook, a boy, about four or five years of age, came in with his nurse ;

and in the child I recognized the features of Catharine Aston.—Strange, that, while my heart beat at the recollections which thronged upon it, it should never occur to me to whom the boy belonged!—but so it was. I was ever fond of children, and they in return were ever fond of me. I took the boy upon my knee, and loaded him with caresses, and kissed again and again his beautiful lips; while he, delighted, threw his little arms about my neck, and rubbing his soft cheek against mine, lisped in his angel voice:—

“Why a’n’t you my papa? I love you much better!”

The innocent! he little knew how much he pained me.

“And who is your papa?”—I asked—“What is your name, my little fellow?”

“George Catling, sir.”

Great God! were the boy an adder in mine arms, and his harmless words a sting to pierce me, I had not dropped him with more of horror. I rushed from the store, and walked rapidly homeward; while, all the way, the prattle of that beautiful boy—the fruit of the loves of my false friend and Catharine!—kept sounding in my ear—“Why a’n’t you my papa?” I was about to enter my own house, when I heard some one cry out—“Mr. Levis! Mr. Levis! Stop a moment, sir!” I turned, and saw the nurse with the child: I was obliged to stop. “Good God! is it indeed your own self, Mr. Levis?” exclaimed the woman. I put back her bonnet: it was the maid-servant whom I had seen with Catharine six years ago. “I did not know you, sir, before,” she added. “O, sir! I have so much to tell you, all about——!” I stopped her:—“Not now, not now! I cannot hear it now. Come to-morrow to my office.”.....“No! nurse sha’n’t come!”—pouted the boy—“and I wont come either! you didn’t treat me well.” The scene was becoming too public: so I shut the door, bidding the woman remember to come on the morrow.

On the morrow she came, and with the boy. Though at first I felt unpleasant, I could not resist the child's manner—half dejected, half roguish; for I thought I saw in it the seeds of a pride like Catharine's; and then, his features were so wholly hers! not an atom of his false father's likeness!—I took him in my arms: he struggled a little:—

“You wont treat me so like my own papa does, if I come? will you?”

“No, my dear, I will not.”

“Then I'll come!”—and the little rogue jumped upon my knees, and threw his arms about my neck. “You must be always as good as you are now,”—he prattled—“and then I'll always love you; and come so often!—as often as nurse will bring me—sha'n't I? And I will tell you ever so many little stories that my mama learnt me—but she can't learn me any more now, for they put her in an ugly coffin, and buried her in a great black hole——O, what makes you look so white? you frighten me! That's just the way my mama looked, when they dressed her up in a white sheet—and your cheek feels cold, just like hers——O, nurse, nurse! take me off! I'm afraid; he shakes me so!——Now don't cry, and I'll stay then—don't! I don't love to see you cry—my mama used to cry, and hug me just so—”

It was too much; I had to put the child down. In a few moments I suppresséd my emotions; for I could not bear that the nurse should witness them,—and thus, for once, my sensitiveness was of service. I then took the boy again upon my knee. The story of his mother's death had made him inexpressibly dear to me: I no longer thought of his father—I saw him only as the child of Catharine; and, as such, I looked upon him as a living and beautiful remembrance of my ill-fated affections: and I pressed the boy to my heart, and as I kissed his cherub lips vowed to love him with a father's love.

"Now you're good again," said the prattler, patting my cheek with his little, soft fingers—"and I'll sit all day on your lap if you like—and sing you the pretty songs my mama taught me—"

"But you must not talk to me of your mama, sweet boy."

"And why not? I never liked any body so well as you, except my mama; and I never liked any body so well as my mama; and I'm sure if my mama was alive she would love you as well as I do."

Poor child! could he but have known what torture his innocent words inflicted—! But children are acute observers:—He heard me sigh, and noticed the pang which shot across my features, and he went on, unconsciously adding torture after torture;—

"But you must not look so, and breathe so hard—that's just the way my mama used to do, when papa spoke cross words to her: and she used to do more too! she used to cry over me when papa was gone; and then take me by her bed, and go down on her knees, and make me go down on my knees too, and say such pretty prayers—"

Here the nurse interposed, very opportunely for my feelings. I wonder she had not done so sooner.

"George, George, you mustn't talk so to the gentleman! I must tell your pa' of you, if you speak such naughty tales."

"I don't speak naughty tales!"—said the boy—"My mama told me I must always tell the truth, and never be afraid—and I'll do just as my mama told me, that I will!"

That artless speech reminded me so strongly of his noble mother, that I clasped the sweet child to my breast in an ecstasy of pleasure, and covered him with kisses.

"You're a brave boy!"—I said to him, patting his curly head—"and God will reward you, if you always do what your mother hath bidden you. But go now!"—I added, setting him down; for the interview was becoming too powerful for my feelings—"I can hold you no longer: I want to talk a little to your nurse. So, George,

you may look over those pretty pictures on the chair, till I call you."

The woman answered all my questions with great readiness; and I learned from her that her mistress had seen but few happy days since her marriage; for, soon after it had taken place, her husband began to treat her with the coldest neglect:—he resumed all his libertine habits; he even spent whole weeks from the house, and only returned to reproach her, because she did not welcome him with smiles when she should have shed tears: but she never complained; and every body believed she was dying of an hereditary consumption. She had enjoyed some little quiet after the birth of her child; for the feelings of a father were then new to her unsteady husband: but that quiet was of short continuance; for the novelty of those feelings, as it wore off, carried with it all the short-lived tenderness which had revived for the mother. For four years from that time, it appears, she lingered through a miserable life, wasting gradually, and deriving her only comfort from the care of her little son; and on that son's fifth birth-day—which was exactly a year before my return from the continent—she died. Few knew the disease which had destroyed her:—she died of a broken heart.

At the conclusion of the melancholy tale of which I have given you an abstract in my own words, the nurse added:—"O, I had almost forgot it! a few days before my mistress died she called me to her, and handing me a kind of case, sealed all up in a nice white paper, she gave it to me to take care of. She said she had nobody who she could trust it to but me, and made me take my bible-oath—though my mistress might have trusted my bare word for that matter, seeing as how I was always a faithful servant to her to the day of her death; and, I will say it for her, she was as sweet a young lady as I'd ever wish to serve—she made me swear to deliver it to nobody's hands but Mr. Levis's——"....."Where is it?" I ex.

claimed, "Why did you not mention it before?".....
 "O sir! you was so taken up with that sweet baby—God bless his little heart and soul! I'm sure I love him as my own son—it slipped clean out of my head. But pray don't be so impatient, sir! it is safe and sound in my own snug little trunk; and I'll fetch it this instant, if Mr. Levis——"....."Go, for God's sake!" I cried, in an agony of impatience; and, with difficulty forcing my purse upon her, I pushed the creature from the door—"and there, take the boy with you; but do not bring him back!"

———"And this is the token that Catharine left me"—added my uncle; and rising, he took from the drawer I have before mentioned a small morocco case. "There," he said, as he placed it in my hands—"there, look at it, nephew; and wonder no longer that even thirty years have served but to hallow the memory of my first and—only love."

I opened the case. It contained, as I suspected, the miniature of Catharine Aston. The face, though not quite so extraordinary as my uncle had described the original to have been, was eminently beautiful, and bore, to a remarkable degree, the impress of that character which the doctor had assigned to his unfortunate mistress. But what struck me most was a slip of paper at the back of the picture, on which was written, in a small, trembling hand, the following words:—

Forgive the selfishness of a dying woman, who would fain live in the remembrance of him whose misery it was her hardest fate to be, and who with her latest-breath blesses the only being that ever truly loved the unhappy

Catharine.

I returned the picture without a remark; and without a remark my uncle replaced it in the drawer: but I observed that he first wrapped it, with great care, in a

bit of torn paper with a broken seal, and enclosed the whole in another envelope.

He resumed his story :—

Amid the emotions caused by these tokens, especially the note, astonishment at the contents of the latter was by no means feeble. Catharine's confidence to the last in the truth of my affection implied she had been undeceived as to my assertions of indifference ;—and who had undeceived her ? for my letter had been worded so cautiously that there was no possibility of her having seen through its artifice—nay her own character must have guarded it against detection. And then her assertion that *I was the only being that had ever truly loved her !* Her parents—where had they been ? Had they too joined to add more bitterness to a fate already sufficiently nauseous ?—and I was on the rack with anxiety. In less than a week all was explained to me—and by her husband himself !

The nurse brought the child to see me every day. It was on his third visit that my little favourite prattled thus ; among other things :—“ Levis,”—so I had taught him to call me, because—and perhaps ridiculously enough—because his mother had always addressed me by that name, while she yet loved me—“ Levis, do you know my papa ? my papa knows you.”.....“ Ha ! what's that you say ?” I exclaimed ; “ How do you know he does, sweet boy ?”.....“ Because I told my papa all about my dear Levis, and how much I loved you—much better than I did him ; and Papa looked so funny ! and asked me so many questions about you ! I don't know any of them now, Levis ; only when I asked him, ‘ Do you know my Levis, Papa ?’ he said, ‘ Yes, damn it !’—That was a bad word, wasn't it, Levis ? my mama always told me it was naughty to say such words.”.....“ Yes, my dear ; none but wicked people say such words.”.....“ Then my papa is wicked ; isn't he, Levis ?” It was a trying question ; but I endeavoured to evade it :—“ He might

have been angry, love ; and people when they are angry sometimes say what they should not say.”.....“Then my papa is very often angry. But I’ll never be angry, and then I shall be a good boy—sha’n’t I, Levis? and you’ll always love me, wont you?”.....“That I will, my brave boy!”—and I covered the innocent with kisses. “Papa never kisses me as you do, Levis,” said the delighted child ; “my mama used to kiss me just as you do—I don’t believe my papa loves me as much as you ; he pushed me down yesterday, and hurt me, because I clumb up on his bed when he was sick. Did you know my papa was sick, Levis?—a great many doctors come to see him every day—why don’t you come? Nurse says you are a doctor.” I questioned the nurse, and found the child was right—his father was considered to be very ill.—For three days the child continued to ask me, on his visits, why I did not go to see his papa. On the fourth day the nurse came running into my office without him. “O Lord, sir!” she cried, “you must come instantly—Mr. Catling’s dying—he’s dying, sir, and asked some one to go for Dr. Levis—and so I ran off as fast as ever my legs could carry me.”.....“How?—you are dreaming, woman—sent for *me*?”.....“O yes, sir ; I heard him say, as plain as day, *For God’s sake, let some one go to Dr. Levis! Tell him I’m dying, and must see him directly.* I’m sure, sir, he wants your advice—though after all that happened,——” I should have let the woman run on much longer—for I was too surprised to interrupt her—, when a gentleman dressed like a clergyman suddenly entered, and confirmed her intelligence. He said the dying man had declared that something lay heavy on his mind, which it was necessary for his comfort in that awful hour to unburthen to me ; and he adjured me, as I would hope for peace in my own last moments, to go with him instantly. I could not resist this appeal ; so I rose and followed him.

I was in the presence of Catling. I sat down by his bed-side without looking at him ;—not that I nourished hatred at such a time ; but a strange and deadly sickness crept upon me, and I felt I durst not look.—There was an awful silence for some minutes ; and then a voice, whose well-remembered tones made me shudder, requested every one to leave the room save the clergyman and myself.

“Levis,” said the dying man, “can you bear to hear the tale of my perfidy ?—Can you listen in patience, while I relate the artifices—that—that seduced the affections of your betrothed wife, and brought misery on her, and you, and—myself ?” He paused, as if for an answer ; but I spoke not a word, and he thus continued, with a firmness of voice that surprised me. “What ! will you not even look at me ? Is the sight of me so hateful ? Well—be it so ! I care not, so you hear.— Do you remember, Levis, the first conversation we ever had together ?—would it had been the last ! Do you remember how you shuddered as I boasted of my libertinism, and how I laughed at your innocence ? Why did you not listen, *then*, to the loud warnings of your heart ? Why did you not flee, at once, from the pestilence whose very name was so loathsome to you ? Fool ! you were cursed with pride, and a sensibility that was disease.— Your pride was but vanity under a borrowed name, and, while it taught you to despise the character of the multitude, it made you set a value on their opinions. Nay—start not ! these are unpleasant truths I know ; but you will be the better for them.—Yes, I have heard you rail, with the bitterness of misanthropism, at the vulgar crowd, and I know you would have died rather than sue for their applause ; but, if you fancied it was forced from them by the might of your merits, you caught at it with eagerness. Thus, child as you were, by disguising with your own hands the colour of the dose you *thought* you hated, you bribed yourself to swallow it, and found it

pleasant ! It was a fine thing, you thought, to be the friend of the gay, the witty, the dashing Catling ; it would appear well ! vastly well !—and you looked no further.—Your boasted strength of mind should have taught you to despise my ridicule, but your sickly sensibility made you shrink from its slightest touches ; the very arrow that would have glanced harmlessly from the mail of common minds, pierced through yours to the quick, and stung you to madness. Beware of that sensibility, Levis ! it has already been your misery, and will be through life unless you deaden it—Stay, sit still ! I did not send for you merely that I might mock at your infirmities ; though, if experience has taught you any thing, you know that even death cannot alter the disposition when once its shape is fixed—it will break the tree, but it cannot bend it—, and it is but right that the last drop of that gall, which you have laughed to see me vent on those who did not deserve it, should now pour itself on you who do.”

“ They tell me, Levis, I have but a few hours more to live, though I feel not faint, and my voice is as clear as it ever was,—as clear as in the days when—Catharine thought it musical—Ha ! did I sting you there ?— : I would fain employ those hours as you are anxious that I should ; yet, mistake me not ! it is not on your account—you richly merit all the misery you have ever suffered—but in justice to her who—was the only one of God’s creatures that I ever loved, as she was”—here he sunk his voice to a whisper—“ the only one I ever hated. It is therefore, and therefore only, I have stripped of the cloak wherewith your partiality had invested them those foibles in your character—it is therefore, I say, I have laid them bare to your own eyes ; for they are the hinge whereon revolves all I have now to relate.”

“ You know the history of our intimacy ; but you know not its causes—at least on my part. You liked me,—not for my virtues, but for my manners : I liked you—

not for your manners, but for your virtues. Your manners indeed were every thing but winning ;—they were cold, reserved, and haughty, in the extreme ; but I soon saw through the crust, and discovered, that, if you were proud and impatient in disposition, you were also generous, high-spirited, sincere, and strictly honourable, and I respected the virtues which I could not imitate. We were friends—that is, such friends as the world *sees*, not such as it *talks of* ; for such never did, and never will exist—friendship is but a tie of interest, which, the moment its advantages cease, is broken, and each party makes off with his end of it—— ; I liked your society, you liked mine—we were friends, were we not ? Well ; it was no longer my interest that we should be so, and I—proved false you will say ! Be it so ! you had done the same under similar circumstances—I got the start of you, that is all. Hush, Levis ! I know what you would say ; and you, reverend sir, you seem shocked that a dying man should make his boast of such principles ; but, such as they are, they are my opinions—and let Fate do her worst with my actions, she cannot alter *them*.”

“Do you remember, Levis, the first time I saw your bride ?—but I need not ask you. You remember too the warm admiration I expressed for her ; and the question you asked me. I will tell you what it was :—You asked me, in triumph, “Where *now* is your boast, George Catling ? What think you *now* of the power that can *seduce any woman on the face of the earth* ?” And this is what I answered :—“She is the only woman that is worth the trial of it !” That answer should have roused your suspicions : but no ! you hugged me in your joy ; you trusted to a libertine ; you believed that the mere sight of a truly fine woman would change habits and principles, which had taken years in forming ; you thought that I, who had ever looked on woman as my prey, would be indifferent to Catharine Aston—because she was better worth the conquest ! Love must be blind indeed, to stumble thus in

broad day-light!" The dying man here paused to take breath, or for some other reason, and I raised my eyes, for the first time since I had entered the room, to look upon the strange being on whom the approach of death seemed to make so little impression. There was a sneer upon his lips that I could scarcely endure. The clergyman also saw it, and raised his hands in horror.

After a minute or two, Catling continued (and with the same extraordinary firmness):—"Think not, from what I have said, that I regarded Miss Aston as I did the rest of her sex. To look on other women was, with me, to lust; on Catharine I looked to admire, to esteem, to love—and desire was but the consequence. At first I struggled with my passion; for, whatever may have been my principles of late years, I had *then* some little honour: but, as usual, opposition only increased the difficulty, and I yielded. I soon saw that Catharine did not love you. Nay, it is true, Levis! she admired your character—loved it; but yourself she never loved. It was your own fault; you never courted her, though you thought you did; your pride would not bend to those little nameless artifices which are so winning to every female heart; you thought that merit alone would prove a sufficient recommendation—and that it never did yet with woman; and, unrolling the catalogue of your haughty virtues, you expected that Catharine would subscribe to it at once, and yield unasked. She did yield; but it was her admiration, not her heart.—I saw all this, and took advantage of it:—I put my virtues out of the way, as too few to be of any service—especially when in contrast with yours; but I taxed to their utmost the powers of an address, which, you well know, Levis, when I chose to exert it, was all but irresistible. I never spoke of myself; I did not point out the bright spots in my own character—indeed, it had been very difficult to find them!—; but I showed her those in her own; I made her notice in it excellencies she had never been aware of before, and then magnified them with a

flattery so delicate, that, while she felt pleased with the penetration which had discovered them, she believed I had rendered her no more than her due. In a word—I taught her to love herself, and, as was natural, she rewarded my instructions by loving me.”

“But I had not rightly estimated the strength of Catharine’s mind: I had judged of her as of other women, and had thought that even principles so firm as her’s would yield to the urgencies of passion. Far from it! At the very moment when my artful importunities had forced from her an acknowledgment of her love for me, the noble girl declared she had pledged her honour to you, and, though the violation of that honour were the only means to save her from misery, she would spurn the meanness without a moment’s doubt. I saw that this was not the affectation which every woman thinks she must assume for the sake of appearances, and does assume with the expectance of its being disregarded, but the genuine declaration of an honour as scrupulous as your own, Levis—and that—I speak it honestly—is saying much indeed.

“I was hopeless. Yes, believe me—I had abandoned forever the prospect of my desires; and when I left you to visit, as I said, a sick relative, it was with the intention of never returning till I had forgotten in some new conquest the fatal charms of Catharine Aston. Curse, then, that folly which revived my dying hopes! Curse, I say, that deceitful sensibility, which, with the same hand, plunged you into the gulf, and threw to me the means of safety—that in the end it might wreck us all! Had you but struggled with that weakness, you might now be happy, and Catharine—Catharine had not perished; for I am convinced that, the high-minded girl once yours by the bond of marriage, duty would have soon levelled a passion not founded on esteem, and habit have engendered that surer affection which I have observed to be the only safeguard of happiness in the marriage state: but——mark the reverse! I, seeking to blast my sight

with the success of a rival, am present at the ceremony of your union : your bride, unhappily, sees me, and, the association thus suddenly formed in her mind beating with too fierce a shock upon a frame so enfeebled, faints ; while you—when all your tenderness should have been roused by a scene so distressing—you leave your mistress to her fate, and rush from the altar—fool, madman, as you are !—to——clear the way for my triumph ! O generous, noble-hearted man !”.....“Wretch !” I exclaimed, forgetting, in the insult of this sneer, the charity which was due to Catling’s situation—“fiend ! Is it thus you use your last breath—in adding insult to misery ? Would you go down to your grave, burdened with the curse of the man you have wronged ?”——The clergyman grasped my arm in terror ; but the smile of the dying man had already shamed me. “There is little glory,” he said, “in wounding the fallen. I may sting you, Levis ; but you should smile at the poor malice of a crushed insect, not tread him deeper in the dust.——Sit down, once more, and hear me out.”

“When a man is once determined to commit wrong, it is rare but he finds a reason for it :—The injury your hands had inflicted seemed to me a discharge from all obligations to our former intimacy, and I blessed again and again the pain it gave me. Would to God I had then died ! would that the —— ! I recovered to become the declared suitor of Catharine : but my importunities, though seconded by those of her mother, were all in vain, till I suggested the letter which you received from Mrs. Aston.——You know the result.”

“Not three months had elapsed from my marriage before I began to repent of it. I had been too accustomed to change to live contented in wedlock :—the yoke was heavy to me—and I shook it off. Had Catharine resented my indifference, it had been better for us both ; but her uncomplaining agony was a constant reproach ; I could not bear it. To forget myself I plunged into

vices which I had hitherto avoided ;—I had been a libertine—I was now a libertine, a gambler, and a drunkard. I would leave my house for weeks together ; and when I returned, the wasted cheeks and drooping form of my poor wife would speak such volumes of upbraiding, that, to drown the clamours of my conscience, I would fall to cursing, and rave like a madman.”

“If it is easy to love those we have greatly benefited, it is easier to hate those we have greatly injured :—Catharine became at last so odious to me that I sought every occasion to wound her feelings : I took the pains to undeceive her as to your letter ; I told her that your indifference was feigned, and related the artifice which had induced you to affect it ; and even added that you were living a life of the utmost wretchedness, plunging into the deepest depravity that you might merge the sense of your troubles. Still the proud woman never complained. Then came the keenest pang of all—the injustice of her parents. Her father was a cold, selfish being ; he had never truly loved her,—her accomplishments, while she was yet under his protection, had flattered his pride, and hence his endearments. Her mother, though naturally an inoffensive woman, was excessively vain, and had never forgiven that assumption of superiority in Catharine, which the latter, with all her good sense, had never been able to lay aside :—jealous of her daughter’s beauty when in its noon, she triumphed now at its setting. These unnatural parents sided with me against the wretched Catharine,—they reproached her for the gloom she could not hide ; and, when she would not explain it, they mocked it as sulkiness. To sum up their cruelty they even forbade her their house—it is true !—I am dying and repeat it—they forbade their own child to visit their house ! *which*, they said, *she only entered to infect with her ill-humour*. Still Catharine did not complain. I will tell you when she did complain, *Levis*. Listen ! it was—God have mercy on me !—it was—when I threatened to

bring my mistress to live with her—yes ! a common harlot to associate, to be an inmate with Catharine !——When I did this—when I did this, Levis,—then, for the first time, did her feelings find utterance, and she declared; *by the God that made her, she would wander in the open streets before she would be thus polluted*,—and I did not dare the villainy I had threatened.”

“ Well may you shudder, Levis ! The misery I wrought that angel woman weighs with a leaden weight upon my soul ; it has been my one thought by day, my one dream by night. At the scene of merriment, when the laugh and the song were loudest, a voice far louder would cry—“ Despair ! ” ; in the lone hour, when no other sound was heard, that voice has still rung in my ears—“ Despair ! ” ; and now, that Death is busy with me, and I have most need of consolation, it is still here—ever crying—“ Despair ! Despair ! ”——Nay, reverend sir, trouble not yourself for me ; no prayers of other men can avail me aught, if my own are not heard ; no soothing of theirs can smooth my dying hour, where my own conscience fails of comfort. It is not for that I have had you here—no, no, not for that ! but that I might do justice, while my breath was spared me, to the virtues of my murdered wife. With the same object have I borne your presence, Levis : for not of the wrongs I have done do I now trouble myself so greatly,—they were, in part, of your own inciting.—And yet—methinks it were good to have your forgiveness,—it may spare me one pang at least :—Say, Levis !—can you ? do you—forgive me ? ”

I rose : I leaned over the dying man. There was a struggle in my heart for the words he asked ; but they would not out : “ May God forgive you ! ” I muttered, and left the room.

Six doctors, eminent in their profession and the gravity of their wigs, had solemnly assured Catling he could not survive six hours ; and the patient’s own belief had yielded to so respectable a majority. However, he

lived long after, to the ruin of many women, and the credit of the learned gentlemen, whose skill had been so wonderful as even to set at naught their own decisions.

I never visited him after his recovery. Nor did he take my conduct much to heart;—indeed, I can well imagine his mortification at the recollection of the confessions a death-bed had extorted—; but he evidently encouraged the affection between me and his little son. Every day did the lovely boy come to my office; and you can have no idea, my nephew, of the joy with which my heart throbbed, as I heard his voice at my door:—“I’m come Levis! Let me in!” The love I bore him afforded me more true happiness than I had ever known from the love I had borne his mother, for there was none of the earth of passion to mingle with its pure gold;—it was like the love I cherished for that mother’s *memory*. Often did I weep over him tears of delicious feeling; while he, sweet child, unknowing what it meant, would press his beautiful lips to mine, and prattle in that softest voice of his—so like my sainted Catharine’s!—“Now don’t cry, Levis! I don’t love to see a man cry. My mama used to tell me, when I cried, that none but women ever did so,—and my mama herself used to drop so many tears! O, you don’t know how many, Levis!”

When he had attained his twelfth year, he fell dangerously ill. His father, who began to take some pride in his growing virtues, added to his own attentions the best medical advice in the city; but it would not do,—the boy continually fretted for his ‘dear Levis’, and would even murmur my name in his troubled sleep. In consequence of this, his father sent me a letter of the most earnest entreaty—promising to intrust his son to my sole care so I would but come. Need I say that I did every thing my skill could suggest, or my feelings prompt, for one I loved so fondly?—The boy recovered, to become dearer to me than ever. When he had reached the age of puberty, I discovered, that, with all the virtues his

character was rapidly developing, he had a strong propensity to pleasure, inherited doubtless from his father, and also a pride and obstinacy which might be traced to his unfortunate mother. I endeavoured to check his dissipation by what I considered the most efficient discipline—namely, by appealing to his reason ; but, though he always listened to my admonitions with the most respectful attention, and even seemed grieved at my solicitude, he did not reform.—He reached manhood, and commenced under his father the study of surgery. Then it was that an incident occurred, which riveted for life the chain of our mutual affection.

The disappointments of my early life had increased the natural austerity of my disposition to such a degree, as to render me far from a favourite with many people, and an especial object of dislike to the members of my own profession. George was one evening in company with a number of these amiable gentlemen, when, my name happening to be mentioned in the course of conversation, one of the party who fancied himself a wag, after premising a most significant “Humph!”, observed that, for his part, he had never known what to make of me ;—I was a true *chimera*—being a lion in arrogance, a goat in understanding, and a dragon in spleen. George, without a single word in reply, struck him to the floor ; and the consequence was a duel, in which my champion received a dangerous wound.

The sense of obligation, Jerry, is more apt to destroy than create affection in the party obliged, because it lessens him in his own estimation. Hence George Catling, by venturing his life in defence of my character, had made, for any benefits under which he might conceive himself indebted to me, a return that raised him in his own esteem, and enabled the current of his love to flow without restraint. From that day, the difference in our ages ceased to be regarded—we were more on a footing of equality ; and him, whom I had once fondled on my

knee the child of my adoption, I now took to my arms the friend of my choice.

Can you wonder, then, that I feel hurt at his obstinate neglect of my counsel, when I know that the following that counsel is the only chance of preserving a life so valuable ?.....You saw that miserable form ? It is, believe me, the wreck of a person which I once thought almost symmetry itself. George had the misfortune to be born when his mother's health was in its decline : consequently, with that mother's beauty he inherited the sad entail of a feeble constitution.—Pleasure has done the rest for him ; and now—he is dying of debility. For years has he tampered with that worst of disorders, trying in turn all the favourite prescriptions of all his favourite authors, and rejecting mine—Why I know not ; since in every thing else he subscribes implicitly to my opinion. Perhaps, they are too simple ! perhaps—and I fear me it is too true—my violence disgusts him : but I cannot help it, Jerry—indeed, I cannot help it. O, it maddens me that any man, whom God has gifted with a moiety of brains, should make a mere drug-shop of his body, crowding in poison after poison till he has filled every cranny with his villainous compounds ! Poor Life is thus driven from nook to nook, till her persecution ends in absolute banishment.—“George Catling, sir, cannot live eight months !”——and my uncle, wringing my hand with that warmth of affection one feels—so naturally !—for an attentive hearer, left me to my meditations.

Poor George Catling ! eight days after I heard the earth rattle on his coffin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Τίς δὲ βίος, τί δὲ ἔσπευον ἄρα χρεώτης Ἀφροδίτης;

Pect. Gr. Gnom.—MINNEM. COLOPH.

Queth he :—to bid me not to love
Is to forbid my pulse to move—
My beard to grow—my ears to prick up—
Or, when I'm in a fit, to hiccup.

Hudibras.

Qui nescit, versus tamen audet fingere !

HOR.—Ar. Pect.

But those that write in rhyme, still make
The one verse for the other's sake ;
For one for sense, and one for rhyme,
I think 's sufficient at one time.

Hudibras.

— WELL ! how deceived one may be in appearances !—thought I, as the door closed on the Doctor's stately figure :—Who would have said, that so grave a man as my uncle Timothy could make such a fool of himself for the sake of a pretty woman ? — ; and, by way of comment, I looked to the opposite side of the street to see if my lady was at her window. Sure enough, there she stood !—though it was so dark that I could not distinguish her features. However, there is, as readers of romance well know, a certain instinct between lovers, or those who are destined to be lovers, which infallibly instructs them of each other's presence—even though they be both stone-blind. The moment this same infallible instinct informed the lady who it was that watched her from the doctor's window, she dropped her handkerchief by accident.—Here was a chance too lucky to be neglected by a lad of so much enterprise as myself ; so putting on my hat, I sallied from the office, tripped lightly over the pavement,

and picking up the handkerchief, ascended the steps of the lady's house and presented it to her with a low bow. She thanked me in a voice "like the memory of days that are past—soft, and pleasing to the soul;" and, in return for my charmer's condescension, I ventured to press the hand she extended to receive her lost cambric.—Great Cupid! did I live?—did I see, hear, feel, smell, taste? She pressed mine in return! she did, the angel!

Ah, my reader, what is there in this world like the touch of a particular hand, at a particular moment, in a particular manner? Many a fair palm do we press without emotion, when its owner happens to be very old, or very ugly, or—a very dear friend, or when we are regularly prepared for the operation; but place us near a heavenly creature, with eyes of fire, and lips like twin cherries, and whose amiable character is only known to us through the medium of that pleasant cheat the countenance, and let the tip, only the tip of a single finger of ours touch by accident the tip of a single finger of hers,—and that touch thrills along our median nerve till we sicken from very ecstasy: but O, when the whole velvet hand yields, scarce consciously, to the fervour of our pressure; when its delicate little fingers close slowly and softly round our own, locking them in that momentary embrace which — My God! the very thoughts of it make me shiver with delight! Heigho! if there were many such moments in this life we should be very wicked creatures! for we never could think of a better.

You may be sure I had no appetite for tea, while my fingers were tingling with the fresh sensation of a new intrigue. The moment I found myself within my uncle Jeremy's house, I ran up stairs to my own room, and locked the door—to do what?—to write poetry!

— Nonsense! Surely, Mr. Lewis, you have not the impudence to style yourself a poet?—

Indeed I have! and more, the impudence to prove myself a poet,—both by ocular and auricular demonstra-

tion,—and what other demonstration would you have in poetry?

Is there a boy, at the present day, who fancies himself in love with his nurse, or has been kissed by the ladies that visit his mama, but straightway writes Sonnets to Hope, Odes to Despair, and Lines to Blank? Or, to turn to those, who, between ourselves, are more prone to fancy love than to feel it—I mean, the professed verse-makers of distinction—such, for instance, as contribute to those pretty little books that are bought for the sake of their covers, and read for the sake of their pictures;—Are not H—N—, and C—L—, and L—H—, and D—C—, and Miss —, and Mrs. —, and a thousand other Souvenir-writers,—are not *they* poets? Why then, so am I. And for proofs, you shall have:—1st, the poem itself; 2d, my own eulogy thereon.

— Your own eulogy? Truly, Jeremy, you wax more and more impudent!—

Well, dear Reader, is not this the age of brass? Does not that most dictatorial of literary dictators, the L—G—: does not, I say, that new Napoleon, that distributes honours by the capfull—as a boy does stolen chestnuts; or, with as lavish a lap as a trull bestows her favours,—and for the self-same reasons—because they are worthless and well paid for: does not, I say, that bright exemplar of the golden rule, which does to all men as it would all men should do to it: does not that most republican of papers, which would have all poets Byrons and all novelists Sir Walter Scotts: does not the L—y G—e tell us that indiscriminate praise (or puffing) is, and shall be the order of the day?—Alas for the days that are gone! when genius was as sure to produce critics, as a hot sun to breed maggots; when the gallant reviewer, mounted on the restive steed of public favour, and armed with the shield of Impudence and the lance of Envy, rode forth to do battle with his single arm against the host of giant authors. Then, indeed, were quills consumed—then did

the ink flow forth in rivers; while reputations fall beneath reviewer's prowess, as doth the dry grass beneath the mower's scythe in harvest, or the ripe corn beneath the hoof of the labouring ass. But now—crushed is the bud of genuine criticism, and trodden under foot the flower of chivalric satire. No more shall the poor *Grub* hide his squalid form; no more shall he need to turn at the clumsy tread of some Northern Aristarchus: but Genius shall riot unrestrained, and Learning shall spread her withering light on the unprotected soil;—for the few that remain, of that once brave array of *errant* knights, are enlisted as drum-majors to the regiment of scribblers, or, footpads in the byways of Parnassus, cry 'Stand and deliver!' to the unwary traveller; while the only two that continue staunch to their ancient honour, the stalwart Edinburgh and no less stalwart Quarterly, are forced to a dirty drudgery—the excisemen of literature!—Alas, how are the mighty fallen!

— But your poem! your poem! —

And my poem you shall have. But can I help exclaiming, foreseeing as I do the famine, which, at no distant period, must come upon the world of letters, because of the recreant spirit of the once gallant reviewers? For the harvest of learning shall be consumed in waste by the folly of the reapers, and there shall be no son of Israel to warn them of their sinning—no Joseph to bind the wasteful hand, and gather into storehouses the superfluous grain, that there may be something for the time of need: but the famine shall come, and the prodigal shall cry aloud because of their prodigality, and there shall be none to help them—no, not one idea!—and the leaves shall drop from the famished books and their ink shall fade—yea! their sinews and their muscles shall shrink, and their blood shall be dried up, by reason of the dearth; and the bare boards and the leafless strings of the starved octavos shall lie mouldering on the dust-dimmed shelves, and the very *book-worm* shall desert them; and the swollen

spider shall glue her flimsy web to the desolate cases, and no hand shall brush her down; and the bare boards shall clap together with a wailing sound—a sound that shall cry Woe! Woe!

— Why, Jeremy, are you mad? —

No, not mad—except it be classically so, sweet Reader; —I am prophetic. But pardon my inspiration: I agree with you it is a casting of pearls to swine; yet—what if the brutes trample upon them? I have done my part—I have condescended to play Eumæus—and if they will not feed, why, let them grunt on—whose fault is it? Once more, however, I tell them:—Woe to the world of letters, if they do not trample learning under hoof, and tread amid their mire the opening buds of genius!

And now for myself.—

Before I present to you the first born of my muse, I would remark that I offer it—not from the paternal vanity which expects to be gratified with a host of such compliments as “Pretty dear!” and “Darling little fellow!” and “Father’s very image!”—but simply, because I would prove that it is the first of its species, and that the character of *deep and impassioned feeling*, which is supposed to belong exclusively to the poetry of the present day, was actually known many years ago!—For the better perception of which remarkable fact, I have noted in italics* the most prominent of the features that distinguish the present or “impassioned” species of the genus Poema;—of which species I again assert that the following lines, the fruit of my brain’s connexion with the muse Melpomene, are the true Adam.

And now,

Favete linguis; carmina non prius
Audita Musarum sacerdos
Virginibus puerisque canto.

* I find, on revision, I have underscored almost every word. As this might tend to confuse the reader, I shall leave him to trace out the *features* himself,—which he can easily do, if he has read a few numbers of the New Monthly.

LINES TO —————.

Nay, be not angry, love!
 Nor turn aside those eyes with brightness shining:
 Can sighy looks and balmy words nought move?
 Nor the deep breathing of my sad repining?

Thou lov'd one of my soul!
 Bright being of my rainbow hopes and fears!
 That on my dreamy hours cloud-like dost roll,
 Fraught with glad sunshine and with dewy tears!"

Let me not linger on,
 Ever amid a life so joy-repelling,
 Without one sunny smile to feed upon,
 Or stop the fountain of my grief deep-welling;

Without one smile-lit glance,
 Which, with its day-spring hue, like fire-flies burning,
 May wreath my spirit in the fairy dance
 Of heart-felt hopes and wishes ever turning,—

May be to me a token—
 To me the sadly yet the brightly lost—
 That, though the music of my life is broken,
 Arion-like amid the ocean tost,

There still remains
 One gentle chord that floated aye unsunken,
 Ever from hence to be, mid winds and rains,
 A cherish'd thing—unfaded and unshrunkened!

Yes! this shall rest—
 This pressure of thy hand—the softly blushing!
 An amulet to still my throbbing breast,
 And sooth Despair's dark waves when inward gushing.

Then fare-thee-well!
 Thou beautiful and lov'd! aye bless'd to be!
 Over my tomb though toll the teary knell,
 My mouth shall, shell-like, ope, to moan for thee.

I beg the reader's critical attention for a few minutes longer, till I shall have pointed out the beauties of the foregoing lines.

And first, generally:—I would have him observe the choiceness of the epithets (which almost invariably end in *y*); their redundancy (a sure mark of a fertile imagination); the classic elegance of the compound words;

the confusion of imagery ; and that absolute contempt for all rule, which is, without doubt, the principal characteristic of true genius.

Then particularly :—without dwelling upon the rare precision with which I have depicted my lady's eyes—'*shining with brightness*'—and with brightness only—, could there be any epithet better chosen than that where, by I have sought to express the nature of my own *looks* ? '*sighy looks* !' Without speaking of the euphony, which is exquisite, is there any reader of imagination but fancies he sees me before him, panting under a weight of sighs ? my paddles—that is to say, my hands—playing at a most furious rate,—the piston of my breast rising and falling in the most rapid succession,—and the vapour issuing from the safety-valves in my nose, as it were from one huge tea-pot ;—in a word, is there any reader of imagination but fancies he sees me under high pressure, and all but exploding ? And then, "the deep breathing of my sad re-pining"—a beautiful line ! But I need not dilate upon it ; for the reader has only to picture to himself Mount *Ætna* before an eruption, and he has before him the unfortunate Jeremy hiccuping in his arm-chair.

The whole of the second stanza is a wonderful effort of genius. First—we have the image of a rainbow ; in which *my hopes*, in the popular character of the sun's rays, enter the globules of *my fears*, and operate by refraction to produce that most beautiful of phenomena. Moreover there is the allusion, so artfully hidden (and who knows not it is the height of art to conceal art ?) of the promise to Noah—that there should be never more a flood to destroy the earth. Then, in line third, the epithet of the *hours* is remarkably choice,—"*dreamy hours*"—i. e. hours which are passed—any how but as if one were awake. And next comes my love herself, rolling like a majestic cloud on the rainbow-girded heaven of my dreamy hours ! And lastly—an obstetrical image ! my virgin love pregnant with "glad sunshine" and "dewy tears !"

'*Diva triformis*,' what a brilliant *foetus*!—Bring it but safe to light, great mistress of great Mistress Handy, and the pine-board dresser of my kitchen shall belong to thee, and on its top shall flow a boar-pig's blood a sacrifice at every New Year's dinner!*—But the reader must creep from the feathers by five o'clock of a summer's morning, and see the dew scintillating diamond-like on the verdigris-green grass, before he can comprehend the full brilliancy of this *conception*. Nay! the figure is truly venerable, being like one's own grand-mother's—*double*;—my love is at hunder-cloud, whose composition, by the by, is here explained to be half sunshine and half tears,—God grant she do not *bolt* upon me!

Pass we on to stanza third:—

"Without one sunny smile to feed upon."

Was there ever an idea so exquisite? a dish of sunbeams! O that the ghosts of departed epicures might upward look upon the dainties of this world, from that royal kitchen where they act the double part of spit and spitted—for ever turning and for ever turned! Then might the eyes of Apicius be directed to this delicious morsel! then might——! Yet no! for ere the dish is tasted it is used—O purpose vile!—to stop a *welling fountain*. A fountain plugged up by sunbeams! Reader:—pause one minute: fancy me leaning over a little hole in the earth whence *wells* a little stream, and ready to cork up that hole with a handful of sunbeams, as you may have seen a grocer wrap the bung of a cider-cask in straws.

Stanza fourth:—You have glances lighted, not by matches, but by *smiles*; and then, while burning like fire-flies with a day-spring hue, all at once transformed into

* *Imminens villæ tuæ pinus esto,
Quam per exactos ego lætus annos
Verris obliquum meditantis ictum
Sanguine donem.*

Hor.—Carm.

a dancing-master, while *hopes* and *wishes* play partners in a jig—such as you may see the fairies dance any moon-light night. Keep your seat, Reader; if your toes itch, so do mine;—yet sit still for the next stanza:—

“ May be to me a token—
“ To me the sadly yet the brightly lost—”

An allusion worthy of Milton! Indeed, I was nigh fancying the soul of our own blind bard had passed into my body, as Ennius once dreamed that the Grecian's had into his.* Its beauty may prove an apology for my vanity in likening myself to the devil.

“ That though the music of my life is broken,
“ Arion-like upon the ocean tost,”—

Never was there any thing more classical, or in better keeping!—broken music floating on the waste of waters like Arion,—who, the learned reader must remember, was a Lesbian fiddler that took it into his head, as Herodotus tells us, to rival Orpheus by setting dolphins a dancing.

In the next stanza the reader will perceive the image is artfully maintained:—“ One gentle chord” *floating*, and *floating* “ aye *unsunken*,”—(What a mistaken idea that tantology diminishes either the strength or the beauty of language!) like Arion on a fish's back. And then we have the chord “ Ever from hence” hung up,—doubtless, as if I had said—

————— Me tabula sacer
Votiva paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta matris deo.

* Cor jubet hoc Enni, postquam destertuit esse
Mæonides, Quintus pavone ex Pythagoreo.
PERSIUS.

But, not contented with this common mark of my gratitude to Neptune, I hang it up amidst "the winds and rains," where—wonderful to relate!—it is ever to remain

"A cherish'd thing—unfaded and unshrunk!"

Were a laundress to meet these lines on the wrapper of her pound of soap, she would certainly exclaim, in the spirit of Ophelia, or rather, *Ophelia-like*, "What a noble clothes' line was here spoiled!"

And now, in the seventh stanza, we have this musical chord explained. It is that delicious pressure of my lady's hand—her "*softly* blushing" hand—of which I have spoken. I think I deserve an *ovation*, at least, for this master-touch. Other poets commence by explaining the subject of their song: but it belongs not to genius to tread the beaten path; I have therefore stricken out a new one for my own delicate feet, and, with surpassing art, maintaining your curiosity untired through six whole stanzas, have burst forth *sun-like* in the seventh, *dazzling the wonder-clouded eyes of the rash, audacious, and too-daring reader* :—

"Yes! this shall rest—

"This pressure of thy hand—the softly blushing!

"An amulet to still my throbbing breast,

"And sooth Despair's dark waves when inward gushing."

And now for the stanza valedictory :—

"Then fare-thee-well!

"Thou beautiful and lov'd! aye blessed to be!

"Over my tomb though toll the teary knell,

"My mouth shall, shell-like, ope to moan for thee."

I shall content myself with barely mentioning the delicacy of the idea couched under the epithet of "*knell*," and the beautiful alliteration occurring in the same line—

"Over my tomb though toll the teary knell"—

and pass at once to the concluding line. Tell me, on your honour, Reader,—have you ever read a more exquisite verse than this?

"My mouth shall, shell-like, ope to moan for thee."

Can there be any thing in composition more chastely elegant than this comparison of my mouth to a shell? You have, doubtless, seen oysters roasting; you have noticed how the innocent creatures open their juicy lips when the fire stirs them, and listened to the silver notes in which they sing, or rather—*moan* their dying song;—well, just fancy my mouth an oyster, opening slowly under the gentle influence of the flames my love has kindled! That single line, on the honour of a poet, cost me more time than all the rest together. I had it first,

"My upward mouth shall ope to moan for thee."

The idea of that was good,—viz. that though the dust might hinder mine eyes, and ears, and nostrils from performing their functions, it could not shut my mouth. See I might not—hear I might not—smell I might not; but moan I certainly should, in spite of the sexton. However, the word *upward* happened to suggest the idea of flying, and, so I changed the verse to

"My spirit, bird-like wing'd, shall pray for thee."

In this form the line certainly embodies a fine idea,—that of my spirit adorned with wings, and with *wings like a bird*, praying for its murderess as it hovered in empyrean space. But unfortunately it struck me, that however original might be the idea of my spirit's being "wing'd," yet when I said *wing'd like a bird*, or "bird-like wing'd," I was guilty of a gross plagiarism, inasmuch as that very novel idea occurs in every poet of the impassioned school: and so I dismissed the bird of paradise, and returned to the original line. What was my rapture, when my heated

fancy suggested the above testaceous image ! I rolled myself over and over on the carpet ; slapped my forehead ; laughed, *aye* cried in the depth of my passionate feeling ; and running to my aunt's apartment, begged she would order two dozen roasted oysters for my supper.

Well, Reader—my poem is finished, and my panegyric is finished. What think you ?

——That you have more vanity than I had hitherto thought could enter into the composition of one man.——

Softly, I pray you, good Reader ! Say I *appear* to have. Vanity is pretty nearly of the same calibre in all men. The only difference is, that the man of sense, taught a lesson by the ridiculous seeming of the fool, affects to despise what the latter makes a merit of displaying. Allowing for the difference of gender, the former is the guinea-fowl which deposits her eggs in hidden places ; while the opposite is the dunghill hen, which must needs cackle till every chick in the barn yard knows of her safe delivery.

——Upon my word, honest Jeremy, you have made ample apology for your indiscreet boasting. A dunghill hen and a fool will fairly balance *Milton* and the father of *impassioned poetry*.——

Well then, remember for the future not to judge by appearances.

After I had transcribed the poem in my best style, and eaten the supper with my best relish, I retired to bed.—— By the by, I think I must be differently constituted from the rest of mankind ; for all the lovers I have ever read of invariably lost their appetites when they gained a favour ; and then, they would live on air—dreams, sighs, groans, and such short allowance, till they had blown themselves into a state of complete inflation,—when the fit would subside, the wind pass away in the shape of a sonnet, and the unhappy gentlemen would call for beef.

steaks and porter, that they might be ready for a new attack the next time their mistresses should smile upon them. Now, between my stomach and its neighbour heart there exists so strong a sympathy, that when the one is particularly easy, the other is sure to be particularly greedy; and vice versa. And I uphold that this is the most natural way of proceeding; for children, when they are crusty, care not for crumb, and when they are happy, the plates are sure to suffer: Now, all lovers are children—Ergo, they should stuff when they are pleased, and starve when they are displeased. Hence it follows, of course, that I did exactly as I should do:—I ate, not because I *had been* miserable, but because I *was* happy. “Why then,” you ask, “did you affect to be miserable? You had been decidedly favoured by your mistress; you were filled to the *fingers’ ends* with anticipations of success; and yet you deprecated her anger—pictured yourself as starving for want of a *disk of smiles*—as utterly lost—and, finally, as dying with a dropsy of the chest, caused by the *inward gushing of Despair’s dark water*! There seems to be some strange inconsistency in all this.” You have hit it exactly,—“there *seems* to be.” It was the fashion for lovers to be unhappy, and I did not wish to be thought singular.

I retired to bed; but, either owing to the restlessness of my muse, or the indigestibility of my aunt’s oysters, I could not sleep. I therefore indulged myself after the manner of the loyal Manchegan, who was wont to wile away the hours “pensando en su señora Dulcinea.” I brought in review before me all those little favours, which one is so fond of retracing after certain interviews, and when the imagination is raised to 112° of Fahrenheit; till, with the aid of the foreign accent in my charmer’s voice, I found myself the son-in-law of a Spanish ambassador. The idea was too tender for a heart so susceptible as mine, and my feelings kept melting, and melting, and melting, till they overflowed at my eyes; and so I

fell asleep, with the last deep sigh just breaking from my lips, and the last bright tear just trickling from my eyelids.

I dreamed,—and lo ! I lay supine upon the shores of a troubled ocean. On either side of me, far as the strained eye could reach, stretched the bare white sands, drifted here and there into little hillocks ; while innumerable tracks, as of the hoofs of horses and the wheels of carriages, seemed to tell of some procession that had lately passed. Before me heaved the dark ocean in all the agitation which denotes the recent storm ; while a cloud, whose parting volumes gave glimpses of a rainbow, hung over the crested billows its heavy canopy. As I watched the dense vapour—how it gathered, and parted, and gathered again—, it suddenly began to descend, as though it would drop into the sea : but no sooner had it touched the surface than a mighty sound, as of the frying of many fishes, hissed over the expanse of waters. The cloud opened in the middle ; and I beheld the mistress of my affections straddled upon the back of a monstrous lobster. Her clothes were tucked up under her garters, that the brine might not wet them ; while in one hand she held aloft a huge oyster, and in the other brandished a broken fiddle. Onward she came, her gallant steed breasting with ease the raging billows ; when suddenly a bell was heard to toll as for a funeral. At that sound the lady shrieked—the oyster dropped into the sea—the cloud, swallowing both the lobster and its rider, disappeared—and the sea opening, I saw a great number of oysters on the bottom arranged in battalions and marching towards me. At once my mouth watered, and I felt a strong desire to spring in among them ; but it seemed as though I were chained down.—On the troops came. When they had reached me, they filed off on either side, and displayed in their midst the identical oyster which my mistress had held, escorted by two of smaller growth. These last, opening their shells, took up the oyster of distinction and set him on my leg, then left him, retiring

backwards with great respect. Up crept the bivalve—on my leg, my thigh, my chest; then his mouth slowly opened—the knell again was heard—the troops rushed hissing into the sea—the sea closed—a dreadful hurricane howled over the abyss—and the oyster, springing on my face, grasped my nose—and I awoke.

The first thing I did was to feel if my nose was in its place, and the next—to kick my uncle's bitch off the bed; for the creature, shut up in the room, had welcomed herself to a share of my pillow, and was comfortably snoring, with her cold damp snout resting on my cheek.

CHAPTER XIX.

Here's a goodly jewel!

How it sparkles!—like an old lady's eyes.

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.

—LET me see!—said I, as with finger on lip, I was pondering the manner of introducing my poem to the eyes of my mistress.—I have twenty-five guineas in my pocket—and women love presents—hum!—I have it!—and forthwith I stepped into the shop of a jeweller.

“What is the price of this?” I asked, taking up a ring set with a small diamond.

“Eleven guineas, sir,” answered the man. “I have but one like it in the store: you may take them both for twenty, sir.”

I deliberated. My aunt was generous—and easily flattered. — Suppose I buy the second ring for her—thought I.—She will return me twice its value at least:—and thus I shall be master of a diamond for nothing!

— The speculation did me honour—and I bought the rings.

Scarcely had I left the store, when it struck me as somewhat singular, that the man should have fallen so greatly from his first price—and of his own accord. I had obtained some knowledge of the world, I thought, from the books I had read; I had learned in them that the young and unwary were always practised upon; and I decided at once that the man had imposed upon me. Proud of my penetration, I entered the shop of a neighbouring jeweller, and showing him the rings, begged him to tell me if the stones were real. "I myself think they are false," said I, with a most sapient smack of the lips.

The man eyed me steadily a moment. "May I ask, sir, where you purchased them?"

"At Opal's, a few doors above."

"You could not have gone to a worse place, sir!—What did they cost you, sir?"

"Twenty guineas."

"Twenty guineas!" exclaimed the man with horror: "what a wicked world we live in!—Why, sir, I'll sell you just such for a guinea!" And raising the lid of a glass case, he produced some rings of exactly the same appearance. "I'll allow you for yours, sir, the same price as I sell mine at—for I see the gold is remarkably fine—, and I'll let you have two small diamonds, sir, which I'll warrant real, for ten guineas."

I looked at the man's countenance. It was open, serious, and even gentlemanly.—Surely—thought I,—*this* man is honest!—

"Your offer is fair," I said; "but I shall oblige the scoundrel to take back his rings, and return me the money. Then, I will purchase of you."

"I shall be happy to serve you, sir," said the man, with a low bow; "but you must promise me not to tell Mr. Opal you referred to my opinion: it would only pro-

duce a quarrel—and I think it my duty, sir, as a Christian, to avoid any manner of quarrel with my neighbour.”

I readily promised, and left the store.

— Now— thought I, as I entered Mr. Opal’s,— I will let this rascal know he has not a fool to deal with!— “There are your rings!” I said to the jeweller, in a voice which I flattered myself would strike him dumb: “The stones are false.”

“How, sir! false?” exclaimed Mr. Opal, while his face shone like one vast ruby: “Do you mean to accuse me of fraud, sir?”

“And do you mean to say to me, sir,” I exclaimed in turn, “that I cannot tell a diamond from paste?”

The man looked at me for a moment, as his brother jeweller had done, and, doubtless seeing something in my countenance that warned him I was not to be trifled with, altered his tone directly.

“Well, I beg your pardon, sir; I may have been mistaken—though I can’t see how that could well be either. However, here are some you will acknowledge at once to be a superior article. I shall have to charge you two guineas more for these.”

“Ah, these are indeed worth having!” I exclaimed, examining the gems with the air of a connoisseur—“their water is extremely clear.” And I made the exchange.

— Certainly— I said to myself, as I took my way to my uncle’s office, strutting with unusual dignity, and every now and then ungloving my left hand to display its jewelled fingers,—there is as much advantage to be derived from books that paint the world as it is, as from mingling in the world itself. Now, were I as ignorant of the tricks of trade as most young men of my age, what would be the consequence? O, I should be wearing paste instead of genuine diamonds.—And I thrust the hand between the buttons of my waistcoat, so as to leave a certain finger exposed.

Though I watched the whole day, I caught not a glimpse of my lady; but just as the evening was setting in, the blinds were moved, and her dark eyes sparkled through their openings. I raised my poem, and nodded: she took the hint, and dropped her handkerchief. I crossed the street, folded my paper in the handkerchief, and extended it to her; and as she held forth her hand to receive it, I pressed the delicate fingers, and slipping a ring upon one of them, whispered softly, "I shall pass this way in half an hour."

I did not return to the office, but amused myself with walking till the half hour had expired. I found the lady waiting for me at the door, I sprang up the steps:—

"You have read my verses, sweet lady?—May I hope they did not displease you?"

"Displease me! And could a woman be displeased with such devotion? devotion so beautifully expressed?"

"Ah, would my muse had been but equal to the task of painting charms so matchless! Perhaps, had I known your name——"

"Celestina, sir."

"Celestina? Heavenly name!—But what more humble appellation could match with beauties so divine!"

"La, now, I know you don't mean it!—You men are ever such deceivers—heigho!"

"Mean it! By all that's good, Celestina! or, what is better, by all that's sweet," (kissing her lips) "I——"

"Fie, now! you are getting impudent."

"Well then, if those lips be too high a shrine for me to reach, I swear to you by this little hand, I love you, dearest, better than——better than I love myself!"

With what readiness we lie to a beautiful woman!—when we have yet to win her. Had Job been tempted by Dalilah, instead of his own wife, he had told falsehoods by the dozen. Such is the effect of sympathy! and, for my part, I cannot conceive why disposi-

tions should not be communicated by contact as well as the itch.

"Ah, if I could only believe you!—but you men are ever such deceivers——heigho!"

"Believe me, Celestina! Let this convince you—and this—and this."

"Hush! somebody's coming!—Do go!"

"Not till you have given me back my kisses."

"O, what shall I do! Do go—for God's sake!"

"Kiss me, then."

"There, then.—Now begone!"

"Not till you have promised to meet me here to-morrow evening."

"Well, well, I will—I will,—only go!"

"This first."—And I threw my arms about her waist, and kissed her with so much fervour that I am sure the report must have told through the whole house.

"Aunt," said I, as I produced my remaining ring, "I have a present for you: give me your hand." The ring was too small for the tip of her little finger.

"What a pity!" said I, much chagrined.

"What a pity!" said my aunt, bursting into a fit of laughter. "Excuse my risability, nephew. I am much obliged to you; but I would not wear the ring, did it fit ever so well."

"And pray why, Mrs. Levis?"

"Because it is paste, Mr. Levis."

"Paste? So I had the true diamonds at first—and exchanged them for—paste! O, what an ass!" and I added mentally—*Certainly, there is as much advantage to be derived from books that paint the world as it is, as from mingling in the world itself!* so much for learning human character from books.—

Well, there is nothing like experience!

"Et l'école du monde en l'air dont il faut vivre

"Instruit mieux, à mon gré, que ne fait aucun livre."

CHAPTER XX.

Throw physic to the dogs—I'll none of it!

Macbeth.

I HAVE said that as long as the study of medicine was a novelty I pursued it with ardour :—the moment it ceased to be such, I slackened in my exertions ; and a certain scene I witnessed made me so weary of the pursuit, that I only waited an opportunity to abandon it altogether.

Among the families, which my uncle visited in quality of physician, there was one that particularly interested me. The head of it, a poor tradesman, lay sick of a fever ; and his wife, a feeble woman, was constantly at work with her needle, that her children might not suffer from their father's helplessness. Yet, in the midst of their poverty, there was a neatness and order in this family that pleased me greatly.

My uncle had visited them twice, and, much to my surprise, had regularly taken his fees. The third time, the woman, as she paid him, turned her head aside, and I observed her wipe away a tear with the corner of her apron. It went to my heart.

I followed my uncle from the house. As I walked by his side, I reflected on what I had observed, and came to the conclusion that his conduct was to be attributed to absence of mind ; for I knew him to be nobly generous, and unostentatiously charitable. But how to relieve the poor family ? I myself had no money (for my aunt had not yet rewarded me for my present), and I durst not appeal to the Doctor himself for fear of hurting his excessive pride. Just then, my uncle in taking his handkerchief from his pocket happened to draw with it his purse (which he frequently thrust into his coat—as he once did the

napkin); and the latter fell to the ground. A thought struck me. I stepped behind him, and picked the purse up unobserved. No sooner had I seen the Doctor safely shut up in his office than I set off at full speed for the house of his patient.

But I did not run alone.

"Hullo, friend! whither so fast with that purse?" screamed CONSCIENCE, behind me, almost out of breath. "You have no right to give away what does not belong to you." "Never mind that hag!" cried another figure, which had distanced CONSCIENCE and was now close at my elbow. She was dressed very like CHARITY, saving that she was somewhat tattered—JUSTICE, by a species of jockeyism, having cut off a bit of her chemise to make her bolt. "Your uncle is rich, and can afford to lose it; they are poor, and will miss the sum." "Confound you both!" I exclaimed, "keep further off—your jarring distracts me!" and I closed my ears to shut out their voices, and ran the harder.

"Here," said I throwing four guineas on the woman's table, "take these,—you want them: but, as you would show yourself grateful, beware how you tell my uncle!"—and I rushed from the house before the astonished creature could find words to thank me.

I had scarcely set foot upon the pavement when I found that the cursed trio were waiting to rejoin me.

"What will you do with the rest of the money!" asked CONSCIENCE in an anxious voice....."Return it to your uncle, to be sure!" cried JUSTICE haughtily, as though she did not calculate on opposition. "Your conduct is bad enough as it is; but add not theft to contempt of my authority."....."But how will you feel when you offer it?" said SHAME, that came up now for the first time, arm in arm with a meagre, disagreeable figure, which, though I had seldom seen it, I immediately recognised as REPENTANCE. "Do you imagine your uncle will not suspect you at once?"....."O, I'll settle that

matter!" exclaimed another new comer—a fat, little, jolly personage, whom, in spite of his present demureness, I recognised as an old friend of mine. "Throw the purse into the window, Jerry, and your uncle will never suspect you."....."Not if you throw it in empty, I grant you," observed SHAME with a sneer. "But your uncle will smell a rat, depend upon it. People are not so apt to accept but half their luck; when they can have the whole on the same terms,—that would be a wilful contempt of Providence: and, besides, who throws money into strange windows?" While SHAME was making these suggestions, I observed that REPENTANCE gradually separated herself from him, and withdrew to the background. "Psha!" cried CHARITY, strutting in before the rest of the party with all the insolence of triumph. "Take my advice as you did before. Give the money to some one that wants it, and all will be right. I'll cover the sin."....."Take your advice? Take yourself out of the way, you impudent wanton!" cried JUSTICE and CONSCIENCE together, pushing her from before them....."Cover the sin? Go cover your face, you indecent jade!" said SHAME, turning aside. "How dare you propose such villainous measures with so unblushing a front?"....."Mend the flaw in your coat before you presume to give advice!" added REASON, who, attracted by the deficiency in CHARITY's wearing apparel, had stopped to listen; and, a kick being added to expedite her motions, poor CHARITY retired from the company, quite crest-fallen. A figure now came running up, which from its mein I knew to be PLEASURE. "Give the money to me, dear Jerry!" she cried, with a most bewitching smile, "and you shall enjoy my charms;"—and she pressed my fingers closer to the purse. JUSTICE and CONSCIENCE both opposed her claims with all their eloquence; but though I tried to aid them by shutting my eyes against the harlot's fascination, yet, as my ears were open, and SHAME kept

crying in them, "You dare not give it back! you dare not give it back!" the contest would have terminated in her favour,—when, just as JUSTICE and CONSCIENCE were overcome, the shop of a jeweller caught my eye. "Jerry—Jerry—" whispered the *little jolly figure*, pulling my coat-tails, which he had never quitted during the whole scene; "step in here, and I'll rid you of the whole gang at once:"—and, in fact, by cutting up a few capers he dispersed the whole party, with the exception of PLEASURE, who loitered at a distance, doubtful whether to take him as friend or foe.

Rejoiced at heart, I entered the shop, and at the suggestion of my little friend bought with the purse a gold-headed cane, with my uncle's initials engraved upon it.

—There, that will do!—said I, as I thrust out the cane at a right angle from my body—and drew it in again—then rubbed its head with the sleeve of my coat—then tossed back my own head with a wink of most decided approbation—and, finally, thrust out the cane again.—That will do! my uncle will like the gift—and the giver,—and never know that the shot came from his own locker. Ah, Jerry, you're a man of taste!—and keeping my little friend with me, lest the party should return, I ran all the way home to my own room, and there locked up the cane in quarantine till the alarm should blow over.

CHAPTER XXI.

Org. Un baton ! un baton ! Ne me retenez pas.
Sas ; que de ma maison on sorte de ce pas,
 Et que d'y revenir on n'ait jamais l'audace.
Dam. Oui, je sortirai ;—

Le Tartuſſe.

He's irremovable,
 Resolv'd for flight.

Winter's Tale.

Well, Mr. Vapid, now let's run away.

The Dramatist.

THE last six months at my uncle Jeremy's had not passed altogether to my satisfaction. The old man required so much attention, and was so peevish when he did not meet it ; and then he would complain so bitterly if I spent my evenings abroad ; and when I staid at home to quiet him, would so pester me with his dull stories, which I was forced to applaud, though scarcely able to keep my eyes open—that I actually sickened of my home. My hour of liberation was nearer than I suspected.

After I had disposed of my purchase as related in the preceding chapter, I descended to the dining room. The dinner was just ready, and my uncle Jeremy, for the first time in three years, was to grace it with his presence. I was very hungry ; and there was nothing on the table but soup, roast beef, and fish. Soup always made me sick, the beef was too rare, and for fish I had all my father's antipathy.—Now it is mere folly to expect one to be good-natured when he is hungry and disappointed of his dinner. Good-nature, like the most of things that appear good, is merely the result of circumstances. Take any amiable person you please, when he has slept

too long and his head aches,* or when he is hungry and his dinner does not suit him (You see, I select the most common of occurrences), and, my life on it, all the sweet milk of his disposition is changed to curds,—and they that censure his testiness are as silly as Cassius, who looked to find Cæsar a man in the midst of an ague-fit.—I sat down pouting, and thrust my hands into my breeches' pockets.

"Shall I assist you to a little soup, nephew?" squeaked my aunt.

"Psha, no! I don't like soup," said I.

"Hullo, you John! help master Jeremy to some of the beef," cried my uncle—"that's the stuff for boys—heh, nephew?"

"Stuff for dogs!" muttered I. My uncle growled.

"Or Jerry, shall John help you to some of that delicate fish?" simpered my aunt.

"Damn your fish!" said I.

"Harkye, nephew!" roared my uncle—"I'll have nobody say damn in my presence but my own self—damn me if I will! You may damn my fish as much as you please; but you must do it in the kitchen."

"Damn your fish!" I repeated,—and the next moment my uncle's crutch came into contact with my head. I turned.

"Uncle!" I said, scarcely able to speak from passion, "I go from your house this instant!"

"Go, and be damned!" answered my uncle, "—and the sooner the better." I left the room.

It is a singular fact that I owe the loss of my uncle's protection, as well of my father's, to fish. Pah! I shall never see the nasty things without holding my nose.

I ran up stairs to my own room, and when there, gave vent to my wrath by defacing the furniture, cutting up

* A person in this state is vulgarly said to have got out of bed wrong end foremost:

the carpet, and upsetting the chamber. How much further I might have gone I know not,—for there is a vast satisfaction in these extravagancies, when we have no other outlet for our passion—, but, luckily for my uncle's purse, I happened to see my uncle's bitch trembling in a corner of the apartment. I locked the door. "Come here, Rose." The poor creature came up wagging her tail. I took a scissors and a razor, and cleared her body of almost every hair upon it—leaving in their natural dress only her ears, legs, and tail. I then furnished her with a coat like Joseph's, by means of a box of water colours. Having thus satisfied my revenge, I tied up my best clothes in a bundle, and sallied from my room. I met my aunt in the entry.

"Good b'y'e aunt ; I am going."

"What, Jerry ! you are not serious ?"

"Indeed I am, aunt ; I will not stay another night under this roof."

"Come, come, nephew ! you must not mind your uncle's humours—he is old, you know, and apt to be testy"—and my aunt drew me into her own apartment—"I am sure all will be forgotten in an hour."

"I have said it, aunt ; I am determined to be no longer subjected to my uncle's caprices.—But pray, aunt, who made that cap ?"

"Why, nephew ? what's the matter with it ?"

"O, nothing ! only it is very becoming. I have never before seen you look so well."

"Do you think so, Jerry ? Well, I think it is handsome myself,"—and the lady faced a mirror. "You have an excellent judgment, nephew.—But stay, *dear* Jerry, there is no necessity for your going to-night, child : wait at least till the morning."

"Not a moment longer, aunt."

"And you have no money, Jerry ?"

"Not a farthing, aunt."

"Poor, dear boy! Wait a moment." The lady unlocked a drawer, and drew forth a purse. "Here are thirty guineas I believe, nephew—they may be of service to you. But do not go to-night; do not, dear Jerry!"

"I must, aunt; I am resolute."

"O, what will you do, poor child, without a soul to protect you? With no kind hand——. Since you will go, nephew, listen to the last words of your abandoned aunt. You are about to enter a world, poor child, replete with snares, and full of brambles—where every path is strewn with thorns, every road is dug with pits, every highway is choked with rocks. Your tender hands, untaught to labour, will be torn by the pitiless briars; your feeble limbs, unapt to climb, will be dragged into the pits of destruction; and your tottering footsteps, unused to rugged travel, will stumble over the petrous impediments which wicked man has sown thick in your course. Alas, my poor boy! would that I might wander with you! would that I might lead you through your perilous wayfare! would that I might be your guide, to indicate to you the multifarious difficulties which encircle the youthful pedestrian in life's mazy labyrinth! Then might you pass, unharmed, the wanton wiles of destruction! then might you soar, on eagle's wings, far above the fuliginous atmosphere of this mundane sphere! then might you breast, in safety, the pitchy billows of misfortune! But, alas!—it may not be. Alone you must trim your sails o'er the rapid tide of manhood—alone you must struggle with the adverse waters; and should they merge thee, Jerry—should they, in their gloomy vortex, bury for ever those hyacinthine locks, inhume those godlike features, and sepulchre that noble form—let it console thee, in that trying hour, that there is one eye on earth to weep for thee, one mouth above to pray for thee, one hand still left to strew affliction's flowers o'er thy youthful ashes. Farewell!—farewell!"—and the tender-hearted lady rushed into my arms, kissed me on each of my cheeks, and turning aside

her head, burst into tears. The least I could do was to return my thanks in a similar strain of eloquence.

"And farewell, too," I said, "thou best of aunts ! Though severed from thee by the cruel hand of an unfeeling uncle ; though torn from the wings of thy gallinaceous affection, never—never to regain their languinous asylum ; though parted from thy presence far as the East is from the West ; yea ! though *Ætna's* self should vomit flames sulphuric, to bar me from the paradise of thy protection ; yet shall not this avulsion cloak the eyes of my remembrance ; but they shall look, through the gloomy vista of the distance, to where thy cherished form is seated, shining in the seraphic refulgence of its beatific loveliness ; they shall see thee dispensing the genial ray of thy angelic goodness, to revivify, and kindle into existence, the inert hearts of those who move around thee dead in the petrescent torpidity of their flinty depravity ; and as they weep at the prospect of the far-off Eden they may never hope to contemplate in greater proximity of vision, they shall smile, amid the dewiness of their lachrymation, at the sun they have left behind them to illuminate the tenebrosity of this terrene spheroid. Farewell, thou best of aunts !—farewell !"—and I rushed into her arms, kissed her on each of her cheeks, and turning aside my head—took up my bundle and left the house.

It was the hour of meeting with my mistress : so leaving my bundle at a tavern which I was in the habit of frequenting, I repaired to her house. She was already at the door.

"Celestina—you know I love you?"

"You have told me so."

"What ! do you not believe me, Celestina?"

"No—yes—I don't know : you men are ever such de-ceivers !—heigho !"

"My God, Celestina ! you distract me with these doubts, What would you have me do ? Shall I say again

all that I said to you yesterday?—Stay, I will convince you—thus:—” and I whispered “Will you elope with me?”

She started.

“Yes, Celestina! this very night—this very hour—now! I am ready to fly with you whithersoever you please; say but the word.”

“La! I’m so afraid! you men are ever such deceivers!—and if you should betray my virgin innocence, O, what should I do!”

“By heaven, you wrong me, Celestina! I swear to you—Say, love, shall we not fly together?—a coach shall be at the corner just as the clock strikes eight; you will be ready by that time, and away we will—Say, sweet, shall it not be so?”

“Ah, you are so bewitching! But if you should deceive me—heigho!” and she threw her arms about my neck and leaned her head upon my shoulder.

“Never fear me, Celestina. We go then?—Well precisely at eight, remember, be at the corner of the street,—I shall be waiting for you in the carriage, love. Don’t forget now!”

“No,” she softly whispered, and suddenly imprinted a burning kiss upon my lips, and left me, sighing as she went “Ah, you men are ever such deceivers!”

“Devilish free that!” thought I, as I wiped my lips. —“However, I have no time to lose”—and off I started to engage a hackney-coach.

Ah, Reader—that smile of incredulity! Suppress it, I beseech you; for though it may seem strange, that, at the age of twenty, I should committ an indiscretion so boyish, yet I do assure you I relate the fact. You may never have been guilty of such frolics—you;

CHAPTER XXII.*

DEDICATED TO

THAT NOBLE ILLUSTRATION OF THE "SIMPLEX MUNDITIS,"

THE MODEST AUTHOR OF ———†.

Between the twa was made a plot;
They raise a wee before the cock,
And wyliey they shot the lock,
And fast to the bent are they gane.

The Gaberlunzie Man.

NIGHT hung her pall o'er the streets of London! It was the hour of eight! The prudent shopkeeper had taken in his goods, and his bustling clerks had ranged

* I do not expect the reader to understand this chapter—and for the very sufficient reason, that I do not understand it myself. Any accusation he may have to bring against it, as well as any admiration he may have to offer for its impassioned tone, its magnificent mass of imagery, its close files of chosen epithets, the romantic echoings of its reduplications, and its nervous and majestic anticlimaxes, he must lay at the door of the writer to whom the chapter is dedicated; for *I light my lamp at the sun*, as another great man once said, when found composing with the *Iliad* open before him.

† In justice to *myself*, I must remark that, while I ridicule the absurdities of the author of ———, no man can feel a deeper respect than I do for the talents which he really possesses. There is no novelist of the present day that surpasses him in brilliancy of wit, or refinement of humour: and did he but keep clear of the magic circle of *fairy and haunted thoughts*, and dip his hand less frequently into the *fountain of deep and passionate feeling*,—in other words, did he but purge himself of the affectation of the day, and—study Blair's Lectures, there are few that would rank higher in any quality, perhaps, which becomes an author. As it is, though petty journals and mental magazines may puff him as the rival of the great Scott, and many young gentlemen may grow sentimental on his pages, and all young ladies take him to bed with them, every true critic must smile at his pretensions.

them on the shelves, and the pavements rattled with the rare and lessening noise of carts ; and the lighter of the city lamps mounted, with light and match in hand, the lamp posts in the streets, and then performed his duty, and was seen no more : but neither lamp nor light was in Jeremy's hand, as it clasped the slender waist of Celestina, which was pressed against it.

As Life clings the more to the plank of safety,—while the land lessens from her sight and the waves dance wildly round her ; so Love clasps that, which is his hope and comfort, the closer,—for the absence of every thing that might distract his attention and the chills of the night air that make him shiver.

O Love ! in this world of care, and sorrow, and anguish, how could we drag, from day to day, on the vulgar and slavish soil, the dull chains that bind and shackle, in their endless length, the pith and marrow of our energies, without thy soothing and consoling solace ? 'Tis thou, O Love, who gatherest in thy holy fount all streams of deep and passionate feeling, to be to us a comfort and delight, when wandering through the hot, and shifting, and feverish sands of life's leafless desert ! thou, bright dove of hope, who, when the floods are beating round us, spreadest thy pure and snowy wings for the tidings that make glad our wearied, and desolate, and afflicted hearts ! Thine, O Love, are the realms of fairy and haunted thought ! thine the hopes whose delicate imaginings, shaped into forms of deep, and utter, and ineffable joy, come over the sick and pining soul, as the beautiful dew on the parched and feverish lip of Night ! thine—the fears that bless us while they sting ! thine—O thine !—the noonday vision and the nightly dream, that wrap, as in a spell, the gladdened fancy, carrying it to other lands than these—lands of brightness and of song—lands, where the sluggish foot of mortal hath never trodden down the gay and laughing flowers, nor left one print upon the

living and luxuriant grass to sully its celestial freshness—lands,

“Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
“In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
“And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye,”—

lands, whose habitants are not of clay, the poor, vile forms that strut it here an hour; but beings of a brighter mould, children of the mind's creating, gods of the imagination, pure angel forms of light, such as visited the patriarch of old when he lay down at Bethel! “Without thee, what were man?” Bound to this cold, insensate, and debased earth, slave to its grovelling passions, and its petty cares, its useless jarrings, and its idle bickerings, condemned to grope through nights of darkness and through clouds of gloom, that he may—live!—die!—aye, rot! rot like the sere, and yellow, and hueless leaf, that falls by the autumn's breath! like it to be trampled on, and—be forgotten! yea! ere the poor earth be crusted that is heaped above him! :—But thou, O Love, lendest thy wings of light, and man—man, a new creature, soars at once, beyond the infection of his nature, to revel in a newer, and brighter, and more cloudless state of existence!

I leaned upon the chaste and throbbing bosom of my own beloved. We were now beyond the tumult and the smoke of the crowded city—that living charnel-house! where the poor and rich, the clothless beggar and the purpled lord, are massed together, one loathsome and jarring group! No sound was stirring to break upon the awful stillness, save the fitful cracking of the whip, as our zealous coachman urged, o'er the dusty road, his jaded and lazy-trotting steeds. The clouds were gathering in sullen masses over the blue waste of heaven; and the coy stars peeped tremulously forth, and, like the bashful inmates of a village school, drew back their sparkling eyes, as if astonished at their own boldness; and darkness—deep, utter, and invisible—was within the moving vehicle on whose cushioned seat we rested. “Celestina!”

I murmured in the depth of my passionate feelings, "dear Celestina!"—and I pressed upon the beautiful and half-reluctant lips of her I loved, one pure, and burning, and impassioned kiss.

A kiss! O delicate and fairy touch! drum that singeth to the lip as if loath to break the spell that binds it while it listens! soul breathed into sense, and shipping lust in smacks humid, like homeward pigs, by the moisture of the very places whence they are risen! Was it not through such conveyance that thou, whom Ketch hath collared with a necklace of pure and well-wrought hemp, didst first yield thee to a love circled by bread and cheese, yet nurturing itself only upon want? Thou, for whom I have dipped into water the pen which once wrote thought in characters of fire, and wooed for these dull memoirs the heavy stories which my heart escheweth, that I might keep for ever untapped to thy remembrance that beer-cask of passionate romance, which I once dedicated to thee as to its spirit! Oh!—why—why—when my tale strays to Love, does my head run to thy distant grave, even as a hound runneth to his kennel? Hung—rotted—forgotten by all else—dissected, yea, to the last fibre from the *visible creation*, why dost thou come to me, to tickle and to pinch me? And thou—Rose! dark slut of Newfoundland! thou whom I stripped of every hair, and compassed with a cloak of divers colours! why comest thou in this my hour of agony? I fed thee not, as I have since fed—not as, in these days, with a plate of all juicy, and rich, and delicate meat, I feed one more beautiful, and not less quiet than thou wert! Have I not girded myself with changes—changes, of fine linen, which make me warm in the chill of winter, and ask if I myself am the same?—And thou!—O sun—bed—grave—mysterious belly of the evanescent present—ye have a secret, and a curse,—and

* Vid. Page 72 of this volume.

a spell, which makes my blood run and stand still at this hour; but neither the Red Sea, nor the Black, nor that which is beneath the Black, hath a charm to exorcise the ghosts which ye can raise!

"Oh, Celestina! my own, kind love! what rapture hath Earth to give her children, like that when two fond hearts rend all the ties that hitherto have bound them, to cling together? Aloof from all the world, upon a wild, and dark, and desolate ocean, to have no oar of safety but the one, bright, blissful hope, that buoys them unhurt upon the roaring surge—to cling together, as the gallowing clouds career it over them, and the hoarse wind howls their dirge, and the sea-gull shrieks and flaps her wings sepulchral—and then—O then, to sink down, down the dark, and black, and bottomless abyss, locked in each other's dying struggles, for ever and for ever—O, my Celestina, is it not delightful?"

She shook—I felt it was emotion that made her tremble, and I pressed her to my heart the nearer—, and murmured in return "Delightful!"

"Yes, my Celestina!" I continued, in the low, suppressed, hushed voice of passion—"Yes, my Celestina! even we—cold, selfish men, for whom life hath no charm but the rough and uneven, the hot, the feverish, the harsh contention of ambition—even we may feel, and know, and experience this enjoyment; but to woman—her, whose days and hours are passed in the spells of a beautiful dream—visions, with whose bright and heaven-wrought creations, the dead, the slumbering realities of man's existence have no sympathy—to her, for whom the sordid desires, the low rivalries, and the petty deceits, that form the bulk of our occupations, have no attraction—to her, whose whole soul is wrapped in an elysian fancy, before which every thing becomes nothing, and nothing puts on the dress and counterfeit of every thing—to her, whose mental fashionings are not the plain and intelligible workings of common sense, but like ghosts steeped in the clear sunbeams——"

“ Like what ? ”

“ Like ghosts steeped in the clear sunbeams, love—as a tanner steeps his hides, dearest,—like ghosts steeped in the clear sunbeams, soaking when all else are dry, and seen when the star’s inhabitants are hidden !

“ Such stuff
“ *As dreams are made of, and whose little life*
“ *Is rounded by a sleep* ”—

to her—whose is the actual and unsettled music of existence, which passes through every part of her, and enfolds her as with a garment ; which gives life to her desires ; which creeps into its own bowels, and finds there all astonished at its presence, and musing on the means by which it entered ;—to her—it must be ecstasy, rapture, enthusiasm ! O, my Celestina !——”

I was interrupted by the careless recklessness of the coachman, who, driving through a thick, and turbid, and troubled pool, which the pluvious showers had formed in the road, nearly upset and overturned the *fiacre*.

Fiacre—Ixion, who bound to the wheel art doomed to roll and roll, amidst the writhing and suffering victims of this upper hell ;—mask of the coachless, that givest semblance of pride, and pomp, and power to many actors ; in whose fold the guilty and the bankrupt wrap their confusion, and escape from “ th’ oppressor’s wrong ” ; Miniature and Pivot of the reverses and torturing changes of this sorry life, that seatest by turns, on four small cushions, the disease, the soundness, the wealth, the poverty, of the various ranks of men ! Mightiest of democrats ! that puttest on thy list of equality all ages and all ranks, life, the dead, freedom, slavery, the airs of the lord, and the sores of the beggar—bower and sponging-house combined ! Cradle of infancy, couch of the sick, bier of the dead ! In thee hath the mother stilled her fretful child, in thee hath the cripple eased his wearied limbs, in thee hath been carried to its little home “ the new-born babe by

nurses overlaid." In thee hath the bridal train swept laughing and joyously by to the happy altar, and the funeral guests moved in solemn and sad procession to the eternal grave, and the poor and comfortless debtor taken his last farewell of liberty, and his wealthy and luxurious creditor enjoyed the buoyant air. Now, thou bearest the gay, the laughing, the happy, whose dreams are but of bliss, and whose waking hours but of pleasure ; and now, the poor, the wretched, the miserable, whose visions are ever dark and ever dreary, gathering cloud after cloud, still thicker and still thicker, till they are pierced as by a spell, and through the opening rush gloomier phantasies, and all is calm, and dark, and composed !

Oh, my Celestina ! is not this rapture a compensation—a full, entire compensation, for whole ages, aye, whole years of torment, and darkness, and despair ? At such a moment, what care we though the storm and the whirlwind roar without, and all is darkness within, and the pits of destruction yawn beneath our footsteps ? for to us there is a world of happy and fairy thought, where Care comes not to canker the roses, nor Fear to mar the fair and beautiful prospects, and Sorrow hangs not her clouds upon the blue, blue skies. Feel you not all of this, my beloved ?”

“ Yes !” she murmured in reply ; and, as I clasped her to my heart of hearts, I felt that she trembled all over, with the same emotion which had already rendered her so inexpressibly dear to my affections.

“ And you fear not, my love, the scorn, and tauntings, and revilings of the world ; nor the deep anxiety of a distracted father ; nor the passionate sorrowing of a doating mother ?”

* “ I have neither father, nor mother to fear ; and as for my mistress—my——”

* Here the cannon of my inspiration being all discharged, I swab them out,—and *Jeremy's* himself again.

"Mistress!—how?—are you not Mr. De La Trampa's daughter?"

"No, to be sure I a'n't!"

"No? For God's sake then, who, what are you?"

"His daughter's waiting maid."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Οὐκ ἔστιν οὔτε εἶχος, οὔτε χρήματα,
Οὔτ' ἄλλο δυσφύλακτον οὐδὲν ὡς γυνή.

PORT. GR. GNOM.—ALEXIS.

So, here is ~~the~~ work!—this artful little humsey has been too much for us all.
Gone off with a man?

Jealous Wife.

A WAITING-MAID!—I recoiled as from the hug of a bear.

It was sometime before I recovered my speech, which I did to use it in invective against my—*mistress!* *my own, my beloved!* O fie, fie!

"And so," I exclaimed, "I have been playing the fool all this time to win a——servant-wench!"

"To be sure you have!" replied my darling, in perfect good-humour—"And pray, what else did you expect to win, Master Levis? Was you such an ass, as to think a lady would stand, at a street door, to listen to such baby-talk as yours? *Celestina?* *heavenly name!*—*But what more humble appellation could match with beauties so divine!* ha, ha, ha!—and a lady to run away, at a minute's warning, with a doll-face boy she knew nothing about but his name! O, Lord, Lord! you're a pretty lad to deal with the women!"—and she laughed till the carriage actually shook with her convulsions. I bit my nails in vexation.

"And your name, I suppose, is not Celestina?"

"No, to be sure it isn't! I was christened Margaret, at your service, and am called Peggy for shortness."

"And the foreign accent in your voice, which I mistook for Spanish, is——?"

"Irish."

"Hell and furies!—Coachman!"

"Stop a bit!" she cried, bursting into a fit of laughter, while she drew me back to the seat, from which I had sprung—"Don't make a greater fool of yourself! It's too late now; let the man drive us through the first stage as you ordered, and we can part then if you like you know."

"There was reason in what she urged: so I suffered myself to be quieted, and began to reflect on my conduct. The girl, I found, was not so much to blame as myself:—My own vanity had deceived me; and thinking I had seduced a gentle woman, I had carried off—a servant-wench. "Spanish ambassador!" I muttered—"a good joke indeed! So I was to catch a fortune, and have caught—a Tartar!—Well, I may as well make the most of my bargain, since bargain it is:"—and resuming my good-humour, I echoed her laugh. The girl commenced a new peal; I echoed that: and so we both laughed and laughed, till we were tired of the sport.

When we had finished, I turned to the lady:—

"And now Margaret—since Margaret you are—tell me how you managed to dupe me so easily? Where got you your fine words, heh!"

"Fine! they were no finer than your diamond!—Ha, ha, ha! that was a pretty trick, too!"

"By heaven, Celes—— Margaret! I was honest there—I paid eleven guineas for the gem, whatever it was made of."

"Then you paid dear enough for it, that's all. I was up to such tricks, and so took it to a jeweller's, and found

you out. But as for my fine words,—la ! I got them where I got my fine name—in the novels which my mistress used to make me read to her every day :—*Celestina* ? *Heavenly name* !”

I retorted, “*Ah, you girls are ever such deceivers !—heigho !*” and again the carriage shook with our merriment.

“One word more, Margaret. What was your motive in so readily consenting to elope with me ? Had you endeavoured to make me believe in your respectability, I might assign a motive without much difficulty ; but, as you have made no secret of what you really are, I cannot, for the life of me, conceive what advantage you propose to yourself from a freak like this.”

“Why, I was tired of my place, and, as my month was up, and my wages all settled, I was determined to try a little life, and I thought you would answer my bit of a purpose as well as a better man :—so here I am, Peggy Phelin, at your service.—Come, now, you mustn’t get mad—and all for nothing at all !”—and Miss Phelin threw her arms about me with no timid pressure, and showed that her lips, at least, were heartily at my service.

Though it was dark, I knew from memory that the girl was handsome ; and if her hands were not quite so soft as when they were lady’s hands, still they were not hard or clumsy ; and then, her mind was not an ordinary mind ; and moreover, she was so good-natured !—and furthermore, her voice was so soft ! the softest Irish voice that I had ever heard, with just enough of the brogue to spice it agreeably ; and then, I was not quite twenty !—and, all things considered—I forgave her. What had you done in a similar case, my youthful Reader ?

“Well, Peggy—we will kiss and be reconciled,—and in good time I see ; for the coach has stopped, and—hark ! what says the driver ?”

"The first stage, your honour—jist eight miles from Lunnun. Shall I put up, sir?"

"Of course! your horses cannot hold out all the night. What sort of an inn have we here?"

"Och! a very dacent inn, your honour."

"Drive up, then."

As I handed my companion from the carriage, I thought she eyed her countryman with rather more earnestness than was necessary. However, it might have been from a feeling of patriotism; for the fellow was handsome, and of most manly proportions.

"I hope your honour will consider the horses, sir—the poor bastes have had a hard go of it, your honour"—(eight miles in two hours!) "it'll be downright murder to be after drivin' 'em back agin to-night."

"In the devil's name, then, put them up, and yourself too! I'll settle for the whole expense:—and here, I may as well pay you now;—what is the fare?"

"A guinea, your honour—and a moderate bit of a bill it is, too!—but Dennis O'Dogherty isn't the lad to be after chating so cliver a gintleman, at all, at all!"

"Well, Dennis, there it is—and a crown for yourself, my good fellow."

"Ah! long life to your honour, for a swate——" I turned to the house before he could finish; but I heard the rascal add, in a lower tone—"fool of a gintleman!" A lesson from a hackney-coachman is as good as a lesson from a hackney-moralist.

I did not dream, that night, of bridal processions, and ladies, and lobsters—for I had neither oysters nor poetry to digest; but, blest with a quiet conscience, I slept till some hours after cock-crow. On awaking, I found that the *ci-devant* and *soi-disant* Celestina had quitted my protection, taking my bundle with her own by way of keepsake. Nor was that all;—for, determined to take time by the forelock, she had helped herself to my watch—the superb jewelled watch that my dear aunt had given

me. I verily believe the lady would have left me nothing but the shirt on my back, so boundless was the affection she had conceived for every thing connected with my person; but, luckily for my modesty, having found the pillow uncomfortably low during the night, I had thrust under it all the clothes I had in use:—thus I saved my purse. Damning the girl with great sincerity, I began to dress myself; but such was my agitation, that I thrust my legs through the sleeves of my coat, and my arms through the legs of my breeches; so I damned the girl again,—and then my coat,—and then my breeches,—and then all three together,—when I was able to put on my clothes to my satisfaction. Having finished my toilette, and worked myself into a very becoming rage, I rushed down stairs to the bar-room.

“Where is the girl?”

“The girl, sir?” answered the frightened landlord.

“Yes, damn it—the girl! Where has she gone to?”

“What girl, sir?”

“The girl that came with *me*, you scoundrel!”

“O, your wife, sir, you mean!”

“D——n! Yes, my wife! my any thing! Where is she, I ask you?”

“Gone off with the coachman, sir.”

“Gone off with the devil! And why did you not stop them, you staring fool?”

“O Lord, sir! I thought the gentleman knew, and so ——”

“And so, jackass! rascal!—What do you pretend to keep a house for, if you havn’t your eyes about you?—How long since they left? Speak! quick! or I’ll——”

“Good five hours, sir.”

“Five devils! five thousand devils!—Confound you all for a set of pickpockets! I’ll have you all strung up——five hours! O, what an ass!”

The man stared; and his wife stared; and the bar-maid stared; and the stable-boy stared;—for they had all

collected at the noise I made. I believe they thought me mad.

“What are you staring at, you fools? Did you never see a man in a passion before?—When does the stage-coach leave here for London, rascal?”

“Not till the afternoon, sir.”

“Hell and the devil! Get me some breakfast.” And I strode out into the road to cool myself.

There is nothing better than a comfortable fit of swearing to settle one's passion, and sweeten the mind for reflection:—it is like thunder—the storm once over, the air is the purer for it. I sat down upon a large stone, and began to ponder the actions of the past evening. The first question that I asked myself was:—“Do I know my own intentions?” “No,” was the ready answer. I had no need of questioning further:—I had acted with my usual thoughtlessness. *Now* what were my intentions? I reflected a little longer, and came to the conclusion, that, as I had left London for nothing, I must return to it for something,——and I flattered myself that all kinds of employments lay waiting my pleasure, like the mistresses of the Grand Signior, and I had only to throw the handkerchief to embrace which I pleased.

Consider, Reader—I was very young, very sanguine, and very ignorant of the world.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day :
Now spurs the lated traveller apace,
To gain the timely inn.

Macbeth.

The wind blew as 'twad blown its last ;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast ;
* * * * *
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter,
And aye the ale was growing better.
The souter tauld his queerest stories ;
The lamplord's laugh was ready chorus :
The storm without might rair an' rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Tam O'Shanter.

I SHOULD have set out for London directly after breakfast ; but my host kept no horses, and I considered it unmeet for a man of my purse to journey eight miles on foot.

The proverb tells us "Delays are dangerous." They certainly are often important, as the reader may gather from what happened in my case.

It was late in the afternoon, and when I was anxiously watching, from a window, for the coming of the London stage, that a storm, which had been brewing the whole day, broke forth with no common violence. Now, of all torments under heaven, defend me from a bad day at a country inn. I love a storm as well as any body, when it comes at a proper time—that is to say, at any time when I have nothing else to do but to enjoy it—, and when I am posted in a proper place—videlicet, any place which is suited to such romantic contemplation : but, when one is anxious only to continue one's journey, to be mewed up in a nasty inn—with a sanded floor beneath one's feet instead of the smooth greed sward, and the dull road to gaze upon instead of the living

ocean, and in an air perfumed with tobacco-smoke and brandy instead of the "fragrance of the grove"—it is enough to try the temper of an angel.

"How provoking!" I exclaimed, turning my back to the window.

"How lucky!" cried my landlord, rubbing his hands with delight.

To a man in my mood this was no trifle.

"Pray, Mr. Impertinence," said I, making my purse rattle in my pocket—"is this the way you treat those who spend money at your house?"

"Lord bless us!" exclaimed my host with affected humility—though the rogue was evidently smothering a laugh—"how wonderful hot you young gentlemen are! John Spits is not the man to insult a gentleman who spends his money like a prince, not he, sir!—Why, sir, I was only glad of the storm, may it please you, sir."

"And what right have you to be glad, you scoundrel, when your guests are sorry?"

"O Lord, O Lord! the gentleman's a mind to be wag-gish, la! My guests and I, sir, are always of a different way of thinkin'; they're always for gittin' out, you see, sir, and I'm always for keepin' 'em in,—that's the difference, sir! and this storm's the very thing to drive folks to "The Bull"—couldn't any thing be luckier. Bless me, here comes some now!"—and, sure enough, the sound of wheels was heard, and presently a man and woman entered the room.

The day had been so chilly as to render a fire indispensable. "Wont you and the lady, sir, draw nearer the fire?" asked my host of the Bull, sedulously dusting a seat with his apron.

* "Not so, brother sinner," answered the man, in a true nasal cant: "let us first praise the Lord for his goodness

* Before the Reader rashly ventures to condemn what follows, let him turn to the note on page 315 (infra):—I would not have my motives misconstrued, even for one moment.

I hate, from my very heart, apologies of any kind; but the age is in fault, not I.

to our blessed souls. What signifies a little heat to our earthly bodies, when hell-fire and the bottomless pit of perdition is y-aw-ning and g-a-p-ing beneath us to suck in our immortal souls? O, dear sinners, my heart is bleeding for you!—"Now is the accepted time"—make a godly peace with Jerusalem, while the harvest is yet un-reaped. Pray with me, blessed sinners! that the Lord may avert his flaming wrath from all of us, and especially from this here young man, who is now on the high road to damnation, following the lewd fashions and other cursed contrivances of the devil to lead precious souls into the burning lake of hell!"—and the fellow laid his hand on my collar to enforce his admonitions. 'This was a kind of' behaviour to which I had not been accustomed; so, pushing him aside, I deliberately turned my back upon him.

"What animal is this?" I asked of the landlord.

"It's old Malachi Snubbs, the famous travelling preacher, sir," answered the landlord.

"He's a madman!" I exclaimed.

"He's a travelling preacher," said the landlord; and muttering something about "no money" and "oceans of prayers and groans," my host of the Bull called to his wife:—"Mrs. Spits! Mrs. Spits, I say!—Here, Mrs. Spits, help the lady off with her cloak and bonnet."

"Stop, sister Spits," whined the preacher; "What are the things of this world to the sweet and comfortable drawings out of the spirit? It is better for her to go to heaven with her cloak and bonnet on, than to hell without them."

But sister Spits had already relieved the female of her wet apparel, and a person was thus revealed that made me start with amazement.

The preacher himself was a man of the most vulgar description. His figure was diminutive, flat, and shapeless—with the shoulders so high as almost to touch the ears. As for the head—if the Reader will purchase a

moderate-sized cocoa-nut, and hold it in a transverse direction, with the spots which children call *the monkey's face* turned towards him, he will be able to form a pretty good idea of its proportions and physiognomical beauty. Moreover—to the picture thus presented, let him add a complexion spotted with innumerable freckles, and a scalp thinly plastered with carrot-coloured hair, and he will have before him the godly presence of brother Malachi Snubbs, itinerant preacher of the word for the whole of England. Seeing the man such as I have described him, I naturally concluded his companion would prove a bird of the same feather; instead of which, my eyes rested on a lady of the most striking appearance.

She was dressed with that affected contempt of ornament which marked the sect to which she, doubtless, belonged. Her figure was tall and commanding, and, though not youthful, might well be termed handsome. Her countenance, more remarkable for the character than the regularity of its features, wore now a pensiveness of expression, amounting almost to melancholy, that harmonized well with its extreme paleness, and the simplicity with which the dark hair was parted on her queenly forehead. But my highest praise is given to her person, when I say it was distinguished for that indescribable something, which, with me, is better than any beauty,—I mean, that air which had marked her the *lady* under any circumstances. It is probable that the preacher's disgusting vulgarity added, in no small degree, to this attractiveness in the female.

I was musing upon the singularity of her situation, when I felt myself rudely grasped by the arm. I turned, and confronted brother Malachi Snubbs.

"Sinner!" said the fellow, "do you know you are nigh unto the devil?"

"Verily, I believe that I am, brother Snubbs," I answered, mimicking his bagpipe utterance—"I pray you, therefore, let me get further off."

"Wretched sinner!" exclaimed the preacher, releasing my arm in order to assume that most evangelical of attitudes which schoolboys term *bending the crab*, while his eyes rolled till the whites (which, by the by, were of a duck-egg colour) only were apparent—"Wretched sinner! treat not lightly the Lord's servants!—But, blessed be his name, I have a heart to suffer for the sanctification of dear wandering sinners!"—then, permitting his little body to spring forward to its former position, he asked me, "Do you know any thing about the new birth? Haven't you a desire to be born again?"

"Thank you, brother Snubbs, I would rather not give my mother that trouble." The little man opened his little eyes in awful horror.

"I perceive," said he, "you're in the broad road to hell—and if you die in this state you'll be damned."

I laughed in his face, and telling him if I were in the road he spoke of, I should take care to travel in better company, left the room, with the double purpose of avoiding his exhortations, and observing the state of the weather.

Scarcely had I touched the sill, when a coach-and-four drove up. At once the whole house was in commotion:—The landlord bounced past me, as though he were shot from a mortar; the landlady followed with equal celerity; the bar-maid thrust her head from the kitchen window; the stable-boy came running from the stalls; and the stable-boy's two little dogs capered about their master's heels, *acting well their part* in the excitement.

"Mrs. Spits!—Sally!—Bob! Bob!" bellowed the landlord, at the highest pitch of his lungs, though his wife, and the bar-maid, and the stable-boy were all within whisper-reach—"Mrs. Spits! here's more company!—Bob! Bob!"

"Bob! Bob!" echoed Mrs. Spits.

"Bob! Bob!" re-echoed the bar-maid. And the very curs yelped "bob! bob!" while poor Bob himself, half

distracted, took satisfaction on the last speakers by sending them limping to the stable—where, I am sorry to relate it, they (out of pure spite) yelled “bob! bob!” still louder than before.

—What a fine thing—thought I—to ride in one’s coach!—

The door was opened; and a gentleman sprang from the carriage.

“Bob!” shouted the landlord, whose bare head seemed to regard the storm no more than the storm regarded it—
“Bob! tend to the horses.—Of course the gentleman will stay all night?”

“No,” answered the gentleman, in a voice that reminded me of my uncle Timothy’s; “I shall stay only till the storm is abated.”

“Then, Sir, allow me to say, you must stay all night. John Spits has lived long enough, thank God, to know what the weather is; and the almanac says, for this very day—mind sir, for this very day!—“Very stormy—much wind and rain—accompanied with great devastation. Tomorrow makes all clear again.”

“Andrew,” said the gentleman to one of his servants, “you will see that the horses are not unharnessed,—I shall start again in half-an-hour, at the latest.” So saying he entered the house.

I followed him, after observing that our landlord, for some purpose best known to himself, bent his course to the stable.

I expected that the Reverend Mr. Snubbs would open upon the stranger as he had done upon me; but the little man contented himself with staring—checked, as I imagined, by a something in the appearance of the game which warned him that the scent might prove a false one.

As the stranger in question is so far fortunate as to figure in these memoirs in quality of a near connexion

of the hero, he merits an especial nail in our gallery of portraits.

He was a man such as, under any circumstances, I should have singled from the crowd—being remarkable for that peculiar air, which the exquisites of our modern literature (who, like their counterparts the exquisites in fashionable life, display their superiority over the vulgar by a contempt for their native language) are wont to term *distingué*. Now this peculiar *mein* is of two kinds:—one, the result of a long acquaintance with polite society; the other, the gift of nature alone. The former consists in that dignified composure of the manner, and that settled quietude of the features, which are rarely shown but by the true gentleman; the latter I have seen and admired in a common artizan. Both these kinds were united in our stranger, and served as heralds to announce his quality. In person he was much above the common height of men; but well proportioned, and exceedingly graceful. His features, though regular, were more remarkable for manliness than beauty, and were lighted by that character of refinement, wherewith Education never fails to stamp even the meanest of countenances—when Nature has done her part, and not been too niggardly of gifts to the intellect. The forehead resembled my uncle Timothy's, saving that it was more youthful and slightly prominent over either eye. The eyes were beautifully formed, of a dark grey colour, and melancholy in their habitual expression; the eyebrows full and regular, but with the slightest possible arch. The nose was perfect as that of a Grecian statue. The mouth was muscular and well defined, with no fixed character that I could then discover—except a shade of settled melancholy might so be called. And lastly, the complexion was as pale as it could possibly be without having the appearance of ill health.

Altogether his person struck me as the most interesting I had ever beheld, and I looked from him upon the lady,

and from the lady upon him, admiring, again and again, the chance which had thrown together two persons so excellently matched.

As for the gentleman himself—he had no eyes but for the preacher's beautiful companion: the preacher's companion seemed wrapped in some sombre meditation; and the preacher appeared studying the interior of the gentleman's breast, through the refracting telescope of the gentleman's countenance.

Suddenly the holy man arose, and approaching the stranger till he had brought his head close to the latter's elbow, thrust forth his hand as if to grasp him; but instantly he drew it back, retreated slowly to his former station, and reseated himself in evident perplexity. Again his eyes sought the stranger's countenance. He studied it for a moment, shook his cocoa-head in self-satisfaction, and again approaching the elbow of the stranger, ventured to insert a finger in one of the buttonholes of his coat. The stranger turned, looked down upon the little animal, and gently asked it what it wanted. The Revd. Mr. Snubbs was elated at a reception so different from what he evidently had expected;—he brought his little body round till it directly fronted the stranger's towering person, and, inserting another finger in another button-hole, rose upon his tiptoes, threw up his monkey eyes, and began:—

“Brother sinner!” said Mr. Snubbs.

“How?” said the stranger.

“Do you not hunger after the word?” said Mr. Snubbs.

“What do you mean?” said the stranger.

“Have you never felt within you the sweet drawings out of the spirit?” said Mr. Snubbs,—“the dawnings of a new hope unto ——?”

“Are you mad?” said the stranger, relieving himself of the preacher's grasp.

“Mad!” said Mr. Snubbs,—“no, poor sinner! I am a feeble instrument in the hands of the Lord to check

the backslidings of precious souls. Have you ever felt that you were born again?"

"This, sir," said the stranger, seriously, yet with mildness, "is neither a time nor a place for such subjects."

"O!" said Mr. Snubbs, "check not the glorious work! your heart is in a seeking way—now is the time—!"

"Be silent, sir!" said the stranger, "I am not disposed to listen to your blasphemy."

"But—" said Mr. Snubbs.

"I will have it so!" said the stranger sternly—and the Rev. Malachi Snubbs sat down, completely crest-fallen.

I was astonished. "The devil's in it," thought I, "if I don't assume this same dignity myself, since it is so effectual over the vulgar!"

Scarcely had I formed the resolution, when our landlord entered—his hair dripping like a wet mop, but his eyes sparkling with pleasure. I drew him aside. "Mr. Landlord," said I, in a manner which was meant to mark the vast difference between Jeremy Levis, Gentleman, and John Spits, Tavern-keeper, "who is that tall gentleman?" Mr. Spits stared with undisguised amazement; but, quickly screwing his features into that peculiar expression, which is often assumed as a polite method of telling one how gladly we would laugh at him, did not good-manners—or fear—forbid, he begged to know, with all the innocence imaginable, "What tall gentleman" I meant.

"The one that arrived a few minutes since. There! him that is leaning on the mantle piece."

"O sir!—yes—yes, I see now. Lord bless you, sir! how should I know?"

"Come, come, Mr. Spits! this affected ignorance will not answer with me, sir. What did you learn, in the stable, about him?"

"Stable?"

"Yes—stable."

"Stable!—O Lord, O Lord! as if a man could learn of the horses what their master's name was!—Stable!"—and the rascal, thrusting his tongue into his cheek, and plunging his hands to the bottom of his breeches' pockets, was moving off with all possible coolness.

"Stop sir!" said I, "I insist upon your answering me!"

"But—" said Mr. Spits.

"But I insist upon it!" said I, sternly, "*I will have it so!*"

"Then you must ask the horses yourself, sir," said Mr. Spits.

The devil! this was another kind of result from what I had expected. "Hum!" I exclaimed, half-aloud, "airs of dignity will never do for me, I perceive.—I know what will do, though!"—and springing after my host of the Bull, I drew him back by the collar.

"Look ye, Mr. Spits!" said I, drawing my purse from my pocket, "you see this purse?—Well!—you see the hand that holds it? Now sir, tell me, instantly, who that gentleman is, or I'll quit your house this afternoon, though the storm should double its violence,—and, moreover, will box your knave's-ears so soundly, that for a week to come you shall fancy your dinner-bell has taken lodgings in them."

This mode of proceeding was certainly the very reverse of dignity; but it had the effect I wished; for Mr. Spits, either frightened by my threat, or soothed by the charms of my gold, became pliable at once.

"Lord bless you, sir! I hope Mr. Levis is not angry? It was all a joke, sir!—all a joke—as true as my name is John Spits, sign of the Bull."

"Yes, but, Mr. John Spits, sign of the Bull, you are not to learn, I presume, that your jokes are never to be cracked upon your guests."

"That's true, sir—very true, indeed! So I'll just tell you all about it; for, allow me to say, John Spits is not

the man to offend such a generous gentleman as Mr. Levis,—not he indeed, sir! Well, you must know, sir, that that tall gentleman, he that is leaning upon the mantle-piece there, the one your honour was asking the horse about.—I beg your pardon, sir; I didn't mean to offend, upon my honour,—that gentleman is Sir Jeemes Maitland, Baronet. He's as rich as a Jew, as grave as a Turk, as proud as Beelzebub, and as amiable as Gabriel. He lost his wife, poor gentleman, on his wedding-night, and has never been seen to smile since,—and I don't wonder at it, at all; for howsoever a man might forget his wife after living with her as many years as I have with my old woman there,—though, for that matter—though I say it that should not say it—Kate Spits is as tidy a house-keeper——”

“Pray, let your old woman alone, Mr. Spits. What else do you know about that gentleman? Come, be quick!”

“O Lord, O Lord! don't be impatient, sir!—a great deal, upon my honour,—as you shall hear. Hem! We were speaking about—that tall gentleman—that is leaning upon——”

“Confound your impudence, you scoundrel!—Get out of my way!”—and, vexed at my own folly, I joined the party at the other end of the room, while the knavish landlord followed me closely, that I might have the benefit of his giggling.

The moment we approached, I observed the lady whisper her companion; whereupon, the Revd. Mr. Snubbs asked brother Spits if he could accommodate them with another apartment.

“No,” answered brother Spits, “none but a bed chamber; and that has no fire in it.”

“Landlord,” said the baronet, “you surely have a parlour? This is not a fit place for a lady, or even for a gentleman, to sit in.”

"Yes, sir—very true," answered my host of the Bull, bowing profoundly,—“very true indeed, sir! I have two parlours at your honour’s service; but, very unluckily, I had all my grates, except this here, taken down t’other day to set them differently,—for they were deucedly smoky. But I should have had them up by this time, if I’d have guessed it was goin’ to be such a cold day; for my almanac—which, allow me to say, sir, I shall believe for the rest of my born days—says nothing at all about its being cold;—I can’t account for it—‘*Very stormy*——’”

“But, brother Spits, since it pleaseth the Lord that the storm should not abate, you will provide a bed-chamber for me and my wife; for I shall stay all night.”

At the name of *wife* the baronet absolutely started: for myself, I looked from Mrs. Snubbs to Mr. Snubbs, and from Mr. Snubbs to Mrs. Snubbs, in utter amazement: even the loquacious Mr. Spits was speechless; and the taciturn Mrs. Spits muttered, audibly, “Did ever any body hear the like!” My host of the Bull was the first to recover.

“Yes.—*Wife*?—hum!—ha!—*wife*?—Yes, yes. Mrs. Spits!—O, you’re here!—Katey, my dear, prepare the bed in No. 3.”

The lady—for lady she certainly was, notwithstanding the name of “Snubbs”—The lady was evidently distressed by our rude notice of her situation; and her husband, I believe, was about to make matters worse by preaching, when the baronet turned the subject, by telling the landlord, that as the storm seemed rather to increase he should stay all night, provided accommodation could be had for himself and servants.

“Accommodation?” cried Mr. Spits in ecstasy, “O Lord, O Lord! I’ve plenty of room for your honour’s servants, I’ll warrant you, sir; and, allow me to say, sir, if there isn’t any room, I’ll make room.—Mrs. Spits! Mrs. Spits!—O, I forgit, you’re at No. 3.—Sally! Sally!—Here, you wench; see that all’s right in No. 1.—‘*Very*

stormy—much wind and rain—I told your honour you would stay all night; for what says the almanac?—*‘accompanied with devastation’*—I shall believe in those almanacs as long as I live.”

—I am half resolved to stay also—said I, to myself;—I see no reason why I should travel in such weather.—I arose, and looked from the window. The storm was tremendous. I reflected that, even were I in London, I could do nothing that evening, and should be condemned to yawn through the listless hours in some tavern, where, if the accommodations should prove somewhat better than at the Bull, the company might not be as good; while, on the contrary, by remaining where I was, I should certainly pass my time in a society that pleased me, and, moreover, should escape the fit of ill-humour which would probably be the consequence of travelling eight miles in a storm.

“Landlord,” said I, aloud, “I think I shall remain with you till the morrow; the weather’s too bad for travelling. Of course I retain my room?”

“O, certainly, sir! certainly!” cried Mr. Spits, rubbing his hands in the ecstasy of his joy,—“Why this is capital! It’s an ill wind, indeed, that blows no body good!” He then added, with ludicrous importance, “Well, gentlemen, I’m sorry I can’t give you a more decent room to sit in; but you must make out as you can—just as you can, gentlemen. I’ll knock up a glorious supper in two or three hours; and, allow me to say, gentlemen, we shall pass a very merry evening—or my name is not John Spits, sign of the Bull.—Katey, my dear! a’n’t you most done there in No. 3?”—and, repeating his almanac prediction, the consequential Mr. Spits marched into his kitchen to instruct the cook in the important rule of the *Multiplication of Fractions*.

I shall pass over the time intervening between this and the supper (which our host furnished at the early hour of seven); since the conversation which made that time

slide away so insensibly to me, would prove but dull to my reader, deprived as he is of the real presence of the speakers. The baronet showed himself possessed of rare talents, both from nature and education. His language was highly figurative; indeed, so singularly embellished for ordinary converse, as to elicit from the silent Mrs. Spits the half-whispered remark—"Why, husband, he talks jist like a book!" The preacher's beautiful wife (—I hate to call her Mrs. Snubbs—) spoke but little; yet that little gave glimpses of a mind well-cultivated, and, joined to a voice uncommonly sweet and polished, served to confirm me in my suspicion that all was not right in her present situation. She was evidently labouring under a restraint, either from an excessive timidity, or from the consciousness of being an object of particular remark. She seldom raised her eyes; but, when she did, and found either the baronet's or mine fixed upon her, she would instantly cast them down, while a momentary blush, succeeded by more than her usual paleness, would betray a distress of mind far from trifling. I observed that the baronet's feelings as a gentleman strongly contended with his curiosity and admiration as a man; but the latter invariably gained the ascendancy, and his eyes would revert to the object of their study with an intenseness of expression it was difficult to interpret. Indeed, once or twice I observed them fill with tears; while a slight convulsion in the muscles of the face betrayed an endeavour to repress some hidden feeling, which, though it might not struggle into light, would, in spite of him, announce its existence by the very pangs it cost him to conceal it. As for poor Malachi, he made several attempts at exhortation; but, encountering each time the steady eye of the baronet, he invariably became confused, and at length desisted altogether. Our jolly host, however, prated almost incessantly; and always with that absurd mixture of shrewdness and simplicity, impudence and politeness, which left us in doubt whether

the knave or the fool was most predominant in his composition. When I saw him mingle among his guests with so much assurance, and prepare to take his part in the conversation, as though he were an equal, I more than half suspected that the story of the grates was a mere falsehood, invented by Mr. John Spits for the purpose of confining us together to the same room, so that he might have an opportunity of indulging his loquaciousness as well as his fondness for the society of his betters. I was surprised that the baronet did not silence him; for he had appeared, at first, somewhat disgusted with the fellow's familiarity. As for myself, I was too much amused by my host's oddities to quarrel with his arrangements.

The board was spread, and we were about to sit down to supper, when the clattering of horses' hoofs came sounding up the inn-yard. Presently a rough voice, that completely drowned the roaring of the storm, bawled at the door, "Hullo, within there!—Ostler! Landlord!—Are you all drunk, and be-damned to you?"—and a shower of blows upon the door, inflicted by some heavier instrument than the butt-end of a horsewhip, succeeded to this courteous summons. Mr. Snubbs raised his eyes and groaned—in pious horror, I suppose, of the wretch whom a little detention in the rain could provoke to swear; while our host prepared to answer the call—prepared I say, for Mr. John Spits, in order to show us he was not unacquainted with the forms of polite society, fancied it incumbent upon him to apologize for leaving our company to attend to his duty. While he was acting this foolery, we heard the same voice without say:—"Here, Sergeant Splint, hold my horse till I see what's the matter with this infernal house. I believe the people here are all dead or drunk."....."Or both," added another voice, which sounded as if it were squeezing its way through a mouthful of pudding.

Mr. Spits, now seeing there was no time to be lost, broke off his mummery, and ran across the room,

bawling :—" Bob!—excuse me, gentlemen—Bob! Bob! ———coming, sir!—You Bob, I say! what the devil are you at?" The door, just as he reached it, flew open, and knocked him flat upon his back. A tall man, in a military dress, entered the room with a naked sword in his hand.

"What the devil are you?" he asked, kicking the unfortunate Spits—as you may have seen a beggar in the streets kick a folded paper before venturing to pick it up.

"John Spits," answered the prostrate landlord, in a voice half doleful, half comical,—“John Spits, sir, sign of the Bull.—Katey, my dear, lift me up!”

“O, you are, heh!” said the soldier,—“No wonder, then, you humble yourself so, after keeping one of his majesty’s soldiers waiting so long in the rain, and knocking for admittance with the pommel of his sword till it’s almost bent double.—Damn you, I’ve a good mind to pommel your old carcass till it’s almost bent double, you stupid dolt!—Get up, you son of a b—!”—and, these last words being enforced by a smart blow with the flat of the sword, Mr. Spits sprang up, without the aid of Katey, and bolted through the open door, rubbing himself with no small concern.

The soldier laughed, and sheathed his sword: then, looking up for the first time, and perceiving a lady near him, he removed his cap, and bowing not ungracefully, said, “Madam, I ask your pardon for my rudeness; I assure you I was not aware of a lady’s being present when I spoke so unguardedly;—and your’s also, gentlemen,” he added, turning to us. “I was so kindled by passion when I entered the room, that I saw nothing before me but that rascally landlord. Indeed, it’s enough to make a man angry to be kept standing in the rain, drenched to the skin as I am, and be forced to shout till he’s hoarse, before he can make himself heard.”

The manly frankness of this apology pleased every body present but Malachi Snubbs, who, approaching the soldier, said to him very gravely, "Sinner! if you don't leave off swearing, you'll send your soul to hell." The soldier started, and was evidently about to make some angry reply; but the baronet checked him, by glancing his eye from the preacher to the lady in a manner that intimated some connexion to exist between the two. Besides—the peculiar personal appearance of the Reverend Mr. Snubbs must have fully announced his character. The soldier then calmly seated himself, unbuckled his sword, laid it across his knees, and drawing his handkerchief from his pocket, looked sternly in the face of Mr. Snubbs (who showed certain symptoms of terror at these mysterious preparations):—"Look ye, sir," said he,—“I have made what I conceive to be an ample apology for any language that may have been offensive to this company. As for my guilt in swearing, it rests neither with you, nor with any other man, to pronounce sentence upon it;—I shall settle that with God and my own conscience.”—And he began to wipe with great care, the water from the scabbard of his sword. "But brother—" said Mr. Snubbs. Here, fortunately, the landlord entered, followed by Sergeant Splint, a man nearly as tall as his comrade. "Come, gentlemen," said our oddity of a host, "sit down—make yourselves at home—perfectly at home, gentlemen; the supper—allow me to say—is very anxious to be ett—and I would'nt have you mortify the poor thing for worlds. Here, Mrs. Spits!—O, you are here!—Katey, my dear, bring two more plates, with knives and forks, for these gentlemen.—*Very stormy—accompanied with great—*Make haste, Katey!"

The plates were brought, and we sat down in great good humour, while our landlord, whose impudence did not carry him so far as to eat with his guests, waited to serve us. The harmony of the feast was near being interrupted, however, by the sergeant's remarking to his

brother soldier, while he twisted an immense slice of ham between his grinders by way of certificate that the sentiment came from his heart—or, rather, his stomach—which is the same thing with some people, “How devilish lucky it was we got here when we did, heh Rattle! Curse me if I care a farthing for my outward man, now I’ve got such a comfortable lining for the inward!”

“Sinner!” cried the preacher, suspending his operations—without however quitting the instruments, “do you know what place you’ll go to, if you swear so?”

“You know best, I dare say,” said the sergeant carefully dividing another portion of the ham,—“I’m not so familiar with the keeper.”

“You’ll be damn’d!” said the preacher.

“I’ll be damned if I shall,” coolly answered the sergeant;—and the ham was deposited between his jaws.

His brother soldier turned upon him with great sternness. “Sergeant Splint!” said he, “You observe” (glancing his eye to the lady,)—“you are to keep your oaths and jests for another time and place.” The sergeant manifested not the least uneasiness at this rebuke, but proceeded to grind with great deliberation. When he had finished, “Just as”—he half grunted, half snuffled—(then waiting till the masticated morsel had worked its way through the œsophagus)—“you please. You are my superior officer, Lieutenant Rattle, and I suppose I must obey you here as elsewhere; though it’s dev—rather hard, I mean, to—Mr. Parson, I’ll troubled you for a bit of that chicken.”

The dryness of sergeant Splint was irresistible, and combined with his peculiarity of voice—which I now perceived was owing to a hare-lip—completely upset the gravity of the whole table,—excepting, as before, the Revd. Malachi Snubbs. This last gentleman would probably have regaled us with an exhortation on our levity; but the baronet took up the discourse, and effectually silenced him.

"Postquam exempta fames epulis"—that is to say, when we had risen from the table, "Now, gentlemen," said our host, "I have a very particular favour to ask of you." Perceiving we were all attentive, he drew himself up, stretched out his right arm to its fullest extent, then, slowly flexing it, spread the hand upon his chest, and with great solemnity continued:—"It is, gentlemen—allow me to say—it is, gentlemen—a very odd sort of a request indeed. You must know, sometime ago a traveller left by mistake here a very funny book, with the funniest name you ever heard in your lives—Don Quick—Quick—Quix—something, or other—My wife here, Mrs. Spits, has it, and 'll show it to any gentleman that wants to see it; for she's a good-natured sort of a body, though I say it that shouldn't say it, and 'll show any thing she's got;—Katey, my dear, you'll remember to let any of these gentlemen see it. It's all about giants, and 'chanter, and damsel, and Lord knows what all. Well—you see—O Lord, O Lord! don't be impatient, gentlemen—allow me to say—Well, you see I read in this book about a gentleman that kept an inn just like the Bull here,—and he had a bag, which a traveller had left, full of the most wonderful papers, which I think they called manuscripts: Well! one night, when the company were sitting round the fire, just as we are here, and the storm was bellowing like a great bullcalf, and the rain was tumbling down whole tubs full, and the thunder roaring, and the lightning flashing so as almost to blind a man,—just as the almanac says—'*very stormy—much wind and rain—accompanied with great derastation*'—Well, on this stormy, thundering night, the gentleman that kept the inn—Katey, my dear, get more behind; it isn't respectable—brought in one of these huge manuscripts, and read out of it one of the best stories I ever heard in my born days. Now—" Here Mr. Spits paused, with all the gravity of a judge, when summing up an argument. "Now, what I've got to say, gentlemen, is this" (bowing to the company),—

"allow me to say, gentlemen ;—I think it would be a good plan, as it's storming so hard, just as my almanac said it would—, and as its too early to go to bed, and we have nothing to do, that we should tell stories. I haven't any manuscript, to be sure ; but we can tell them out of our heads ; that will do just as well, I'm sure—just as well. O ! we'll pass a glorious evening—or my name isn't John Spits, sign of the Bull."

This long-winded proposal, which the farcical solemnity of our host's manner rendered very amusing, was received with applause by the lieutenant and myself. Splint said he would "hear a story, and tell one too, with any man ;" but Mr. Snubbs declared it was "all a device of the devil, and" he would "not stay to listen to" our "filthy lies."....."Then you may leave the room," said the sergeant. Here the lady drew her monkey-faced companion aside, and whispered something ; while, by the earnestness of her manner, she seemed to be expostulating with him. The consequence was that Mr. Snubbs resumed his seat in silence.

This matter being settled, the landlord turned to the baronet and begged to know his opinion : whereupon, Sir James declared, that he not only assented to the proposal, but should be happy to contribute, himself, to the evening's entertainment. Our host was in an ecstasy : he forgot his ceremony :—"Glorious !" he cried, rubbing his hands, "I'll have the table cleared off in an instant ;—we shall have a jolly time of it, in spite of the storm, as sure as my name is John Spits, sign of the Bull ! Here, Mrs. Spits—Sal-ly !—clear away, you wench,—O Lord, O Lord ! what a time we shall have !"

The table was removed ; and our host, returning, seated himself in the midst of us with an impudence that made us stare,—though we took no further notice of it, finding our account in this Saturnalian license. "Gentlemen," he said, spreading apart his short bandy legs, and resting a huge hand upon each knee,—“allow me to say—gea-

lemen before we begin"—(here I overheard the sergeant mutter something about *apples* and *swimming*)—"before we begin with these tales of ours—allow me to say—I have two properpositions to make, which will be of some service, or my bull has no horns—I mean my painted Bull." Here the speaker paused, as if for any objection that might be offered; but, hearing none, he continued,—prefacing with three oratorical hems that amused me,—“Well then, gentlemen, the first properposition——”

“Is to face the company, and not the fire, when you’re speaking,” said the sergeant.

“Thank you, sir,” said Mr. Spits, no more discomposed than the sergeant himself might have been under a similar rebuke, and wheeling himself round, without altering the position of his legs and hands, so that his back was to the lady and his face to the baronet. “The first:—that in our stories there shall be nothing made up about ghosts, and witches, and ’chanters, and such like stuff, but all shall be out of our own heads;—I mean, we shall tell something that really happened and is as true as gospel. And the second is:—that I—allow me to say, gentlemen,—for my name is John Spits, sign of the Bull, and I would’nt like to lose my name for modesty, like some impudent fellars that I know of, that go about the country preaching, and God knows what all, when no body asks them—no offence, Mr. Snubbs—, that I, being the man that set this a-going—allow me to say—shall be the chairman I think they call it of this meeting, and direct the proceedings. What says your honour?” (to the baronet).

His honour cast his eye around the circle, and, perceiving all disposed to abide by his decision, told Mr. Spits, with a smile, that he might arrange every thing as he pleased.

“May I?” exclaimed our host, throwing one leg over the other, and rubbing his hands—as usual with him when much pleased—, “Thank your honour!—Well, that’s glorious! Then, you shall see, gentlemen,—but first—before

we precede to business,' (you see I know a little what a chairman ought to do, having seen many a one at the Bull)—before we precede to business, allow me to say, I have another proposition to make; and that is, gentlemen, that my wife Katey here—that is, Mrs. Spits—be allowed to listen,—for Katey's really a very good sort of woman, though I say it that should'nt say it." This request, which extorted a laugh from even the melancholy lady, was of course granted. "And now gentlemen, to business!" said John, assuming his character as chairman. "First, his honour, Sir Jeemes Maitland, will begin. Katey, my dear, keep a little further off—it is'nt respectable to the company."

There was a silence of some minutes, while the baronet was arranging the materials of his story. The howling of the wind, as it swept along the road, or forced its way through the key hole and beneath the door,—the sighing of the trees, as their branches swayed to and fro before its violence,—the pattering of the rain against the closed shutters,—and then, when the gust would fall, the low, melancholy hissing of the shower, and the dropping of the water from the housetop into the pools it had formed beneath—added, by contrast, to the comfort within; and, as I looked upon the eager circle, I thought of the similar scenes I had read of in romance, and my mind sunk into a feeling of luxurious pensiveness that well disposed me for the melancholy tale I was about to hear.

At length the baronet was ready; when, addressing himself particularly to the preacher's beautiful companion, he thus began: —But before I proceed to his narration, it is necessary to complete the group, of which I have sketched as yet but three figures—viz. the baronet, the preacher, and the preacher's wife.

The lieutenant and his comrade were both tall and well-made men. The former's countenance was regular in its features, and, its general expression, indicative of good humour and intelligence. There was, moreover, a sparkle

in the jet-black eyes which, in spite of the present gravity of his deportment, betrayed a lurking love of frolic. His skin, which was singularly fair for a soldier, was slightly pitted with the small-pox—a circumstance by no means detrimental to his appearance, in as much as it added to the manliness of his countenance more than it took from its beauty.

Whatever favours the sergeant might boast of from the ladies of his acquaintance were certainly owing to his person and not to his countenance. Barring its ugliness, the latter was too comical to excite so serious a passion as love. Even in its ordinary state I could not eye it steadily without laughing,—when screwed into an expression of admiration it must have been irresistible. Not to keep my fair reader in suspense—his skin was of a gingerbread hue and a sailcloth texture; his gooseberry eyes looked in upon one another with an affection that despised all outward objects; his nose surpassed, in size, all others of the kind I had ever seen—not even excepting my reverend father's—and, in shape, resembled the back of a dromedary. His mouth, as I have already said, was disfigured by a hair-lip, which of course destroyed the character that might otherwise have marked it; still, there was a smile of half-suppressed humour playing about the under lip that almost redeemed the distortion of the upper. On his right cheek there was a scar reaching from the cheek bone to the angle of the chin. Truly, he must have been an odd fellow who avoided slicing the nose to cut there! Perhaps the immensity of that feature might have terrified him to such an degree as to cause the sword to swerve from its direction; or, perhaps, — but the sergeant shall account for it himself in the course of the chapter.

Our host was an original in his kind. A quantity of coarse brick-coloured hair covered a skull of truly monstrous size and round as a bullet. This fiery crest was parted in the middle with an appearance of great care, and was

rolled upwards, from ears that were pre-eminent in ugliness, in short, stiff curls, which extended all the way round, from temple to temple, like a ledge to rest the hat on. The forehead was about an inch in height, and displayed an orchard of pimples in every variety of season; for there might be seen, at the same time, the blushing pimple yet in bud, the blooming pimple, the full ripe pimple, and the dead and dry pimple. The eyes were remarkably small and bright, of a deep blue colour, and shrewd in their expression. The eyebrows were the largest I ever saw, of a deeper red than the hair, and met over the nose; which latter feature was every thing but human;—coarse and fat at its apex, it swelled into a monstrous bag at its base, where clustered a thick crop of pustules like elderberries on their stalk. The mouth seemed a constant battle-field to Cunning and Stupidity; and between it and the double chin grew a mole tufted with three long red hairs. But, withal, there was about this head a certain jollity of character that recommended it vastly; and then, Mr. Spits had so odd a way of elevating his fiery brows, when under the least excitement! and when the eloquent mood was upon him, or when he took a fancy to ape the manners of a dancing-master, he would depress the same fiery brows and wag his monstrous head with so much solemnity!—This notable head was set upon a body very little taller than that of the Revd. Mr. Snubba, and of which the belly commenced at the third button-hole of his waistcoat. His legs were remarkably short, and distinguished by that graceful curvature which, it is sung, erst bowed the nether members of the red-nosed officer beloved by “a landlady of France.” His walk, or rather, his strut, was that of a Bantam cock. He had, however, a degree of agility surprising in one of his make; and, when occasion demanded, he could even run; but, it must be acknowledged it was in the manner of a hen when called by the chucking of the aforesaid Bantam, or other cock, to feast upon some delicate worm, or such like dainty.

Mrs. Catharine Spits, though not so odd a looking being Mr. John Spits, was almost as poorly fashioned. She was a short, square-built woman, and—to use a popular simile—as flat as a pancake. She had a head the very reverse of her husband's:—It was small, and scantily clothed with flaxen hair gathered into a little knot at the top of her crown. Her forehead was formed like a negro's, and required no long examination as witness against the intellect within. Her eyes were by no means bad either in shape or colour, and, I dare say, served the purposes of vision as faithfully as the generality of eyes; but as for their expression they had—the sockets might as well have been vacant; and her nose resembled, in form and dimensions, that dainty part of a fowl which I have heard dignified by the name of the smelling organ of his Holiness the pope. As for her mouth;—the lips seemed, like Mr. and Mrs. Sullen in *The Beaux Stratagem*, to agree but in one thing—to part; though I could not cry, with Morgard, “Upon my shoul, a very pretty shereemony!” or, except that their disunion served to display a set of teeth the fairest lady might envy, no divorce could possibly be more disgusting. She was a wonderful woman, however,—this Mrs. Spits! I'll tell you why, my Reader:—he had a tongue and, seldom used it. I believe it was this sole virtue of taciturnity that the loquacious Mr. Spits summed up the perfections of his Katey; though when he said she was a “tidy housekeeper” he did the honest creature no more than justice; for she was cleanliness itself—in appearance. It was laughable to see the superiority which our pompous host affected over his helpmate;—while he placed his own seat in the same line with those of his guests, he obliged his wife to sit behind him on a low stool—because it was more respectful to the company. The dutiful Katey obeyed without a murmur. When her husband leaned forward with his hands upon his knees, she looked at the baronet from behind him; when he changed his position,—which he did by alterna-

tion every five minutes—, and, with folded arms and crossed legs, threw himself back in his seat, she leaned her head lovingly upon his lap, and thus gave her attention to the narrative.

And now, beloved Reader, that I have set before you the whole company at the Bull tavern, fancy your eyes fixed upon the fine countenance of the baronet, and your ears listening to his deep melancholy voice, as he tells the following story—to which, from the great reverence I bear to the law of order, I take the liberty of prefixing a title and a motto.

THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

Καὶ σὺ μὲν, ὦ Ὑμέναιε, γάμων μολπαῖαν ἀοιδᾶν
Εἰς θρήνων γοερόν φθέγμα μεθηρημοσάο.

Anthol. Græc.—EPIGRAM. in BRIDAL.

“At a little distance from a village, whose name the circumstances of my story will oblige me to conceal —”

“Your honour will excuse me a moment,” said Mr. Spits, interrupting the baronet; “I hope your honour isn’t going to conceal the names of the people too?—allow me to say.”

Sir James faintly smiled. “Certainly; the same circumstances will operate alike in both cases. I shall, however, substitute other names for my characters, in order to prevent confusion. And, Mr. Landlord, if you have any further questions to ask, I beg you will ask them now; for I must not be interrupted.”

“God forbid I should interrupt your honour!” exclaimed my host, carefully withdrawing his left leg from under the right, in order to give the former its turn of being uppermost; and the baronet proceeded.

“At a little distance from a village, in one of the west-

in counties of England, stands a mansion, which, for many years past, has had no other occupants than the family of the steward of the estate to which it belongs. Before that period, it was the pride of the country around. Never did the weary traveller see its tall chimneys peering above the woody fence that hid its bulk from view, without hailing them as the signals which promised safety and comfort at the end of his journeying:—his eye would sparkle and his step would quicken; for he knew that, when the road he was treading should terminate, his toil would be forgotten in the hearty welcome of that hospitable house. Never did the poor man open the window of his cottage, when the morning light called him to labour, but his eye first turned to that roof, on which his lips invoked a blessing; for he knew, though the harvest should smite him, there was a hand there that would make good the ravage of the mildew and the canker-worm: or close, when the night's chill shade warned him to slumber, but his last look rested where that mansion lay; for he knew, though the morrow should find him lifeless, a heart as there that would feel for his widow and his children.*

It had long been the seat of the Worthertons,—one of those families which seem meant to retrieve the character of man—scattered Oases in the desert of human life. But at the greenest spots have a time when they must lose their brightness, and wither, and be as though they had not flourished,—and the hopes of the poor man faded within him, when Sir Howard Wortherton, the last of

* Without doubting the poetical truth of the baronet's description, I think it my duty to warn you, my Reader, in case you should feel disposed to imitate the Worthertons, that you are not to expect such pleasing results from your beneficence: for, though the weary traveller will certainly hail with joy your chimneys, he would the sign of any comfortable inn where he was to receive bed and board without the trouble of settling a bill, yet the poor man—the permanent object of your charity—might look from the window of his cottage the whole year round, without once bestowing so much as a thought upon your roof,—except a thought of how he should present his next petition for relief. I lately heard a very poor tenant of a very honest landlord complain most bitterly that his family "sent her in nice morsels from their kitchen,—and yet the profligate creature never paid a stiver of her rent!"

that name, died, and his heir—of a distant branch of the family—put up the estate to sale. It is at this period that my story commences.”

“It was a warm morning in the month of June, and crowds of peasantry, in their holiday dresses, might be seen running, regardless of heat and dust, to the road which led to the Mansion. There was a strange mixture of anxiety and unconcern, fear and hope, painted on each countenance, according to the age and circumstances of the individual. The new owner of the Mansion was coming to take possession, and the villagers were endeavouring to occupy the road before his arrival—partly to testify their respect, and partly from that vague feeling which, when we are about to see, for the first time, one on whom we have rested our expectations of happiness or misery, deceitfully assures us we are to satisfy our doubts by a single look.”

“They were not long assembled, when a swift-footed urchin, whom they had sent to reconnoitre, came running to announce that he had seen the longed-for carriage. At once the cry was echoed by a hundred voices: the old men broke off their arguments as to the probable character of their new landlord; the children forgot their sports; and, in an instant, the whole party was arranged in two lines, one on either side of the road.” With not more of anxiety, perhaps, would the approach of a monarch, about to take possession of the throne he had conquered, have been expected by his new subjects.”

“On came the coach which bore the destinies of the village,—a large, old-fashioned vehicle, drawn by four stately black horses. From one window leaned a venerable head, which nodded kind acknowledgments to the low bows, waved hats, and shouts of the villagers; while from the other a beautiful girl of sixteen threw handfuls of half-pence to the children, and bestowed silver, with many a kind look and word, upon the poor people. Be-

hind this carriage came a more humble vehicle with the attendants."

"Many a loud shout followed the party as it receded from sight. The doubts of the villagers had been dispelled, like summer clouds, before the sun of the old man's countenance, and the kind words breathed by the gentle voice of his daughter. Even the hoary elders ceased their warnings against belief in countenances: and when the steward came to invite the whole village to a merry-making on the lawn before the Mansion, and when Mr. Carlton, their new landlord, addressed them in the warm language of a benevolent heart, and assured them of a father's protection so long as they deserved it, there was not an eye but what sparkled with joy, not a lip but what invoked the same blessings on the present master of the Mansion as it had been wont to do upon Sir Howard."

"Nor were their hopes misplaced;—Mr. Carlton was one of the kindest beings that ever breathed. He was not quite sixty years of age; but Sorrow in his youth had hurried the step of Time with him; and his hair, now white as new-fallen snow, and the deep furrows on his still noble countenance, caused him to appear much older. His wife had lately died; and, having but one child, and no other near relation, he had purchased the Mansion with the intention of never quitting it for the turmoil of a city. It was this child that gave rise to the only weak point in Mr. Carlton's character. He doated on her; and, though a man of strong intellect and extensive observation, he indulged her to an excess, whose overflowings were heaping up a load of misfortunes destined one day to fall and crush him;—one of those inconsistencies which nature is so fond of displaying, ever the most in men of powerful minds."

"Gertrude Carlton was beautiful—beautiful in face and person: yet there were flashing in her dark eyes a boldness and a self-will, which, though sometimes useful, nay

necessary, ingredients in the manly character, never besit a woman. She was inconstant as the clouds that float upon the sky of a summer's eve, more impetuous than the gale that whirls the rustling leaves of autumn; yet the natural goodness of her disposition was uncommon, and when she once conceived herself in the wrong, there were no bounds to her penitence.—Before I proceed with the history of her short life, I will relate one anecdote which will do more to illustrate her disposition than a thousand remarks."

"It was about a month after the arrival of Mr. Carlton, that Gertrude one afternoon, in company with a young friend who was on a visit to her, strolled along the foot of the beautiful declivity on which the Mansion stood. They stopped to admire the beauty of a garden belonging to one of Mr. Carlton's tenants. Though very poor, the man was industrious, and possessed of considerable taste; and his chief delight lay in this garden, which he had obtained permission to place upon a little spot of ground at some distance from the village, and better calculated for the purpose than that he had held under the former owners of the Mansion. While they were lost in wonder at the change which his skill had been able to effect in so short a time, a beautiful butterfly fluttered past them. "I must have that lovely butterfly!" exclaimed Gertrude;—and off she ran in pursuit of it. Her friend sat down upon a large smooth stone, and followed her with her eyes, laughing at the same time at the volatility of disposition, which could make a girl of nearly seventeen years act so like a child. Onward the fly flew, and Gertrude followed it, her long hair streaming in the wind, and her fair arms outstretched to grasp the poor insect. The object of her pursuit at last lighted upon one of the flowers, which were just beginning to show themselves in the garden, and Gertrude, without the least hesitation, sprang over the little fence, and in a moment destroyed the hopes of the gardener. Her friend called after, and ran to stop her;

but the heedless creature still held her course, running backwards and forwards through the flower-beds, according to the flight of the insect. At length she desisted for want of breath ; but, when her friend bade her notice the desolation she had caused, and began to remonstrate on her folly, Gertrude became violently enraged, and separating from her, returned to the house alone.—The next morning Mr. Carlton's own gardener was seen working in that place : and, before the expiration of a week, the eyes of the surprised villagers beheld, upon the same spot, a new white fence, and a neat cottage glistening in the sunshine, while a small but convenient greenhouse graced the rear."

"The Mansion had been in the possession of its new owner for about a year, when a Mr. Whitford, the son of an old schoolmate of Mr. Carlton's, came to visit him. The old gentleman showed evident delight at the pleasure which George Whitford took in the society of Gertrude ; for, as he afterwards said, had he had a choice, there was no man whom he would so soon have seen united to his beloved child. Nor did Gertrude herself appear displeased at the little attentions of George :—George walked with her,—he rode with her,—he read with her ;—there were few hours of the day in which he was not by her side."

"Three months had already passed, and Whitford, contrary to his first intention, found himself still at the Mansion, when a letter was handed him by an express from Liverpool.—The receipt of this letter seemed to have clouded the usual serenity of Whitford's temper. During the rest of the day he was thoughtful, even to melancholy : but his kind host sought not the cause,—endeavouring only by his attentions to lessen the gloom he could not altogether dissipate."

"The sun had just set on the evening of that day, when Whitford entered the room where Gertrude Carlton was seated alone at a window, apparently watching the gra-

dual darkening of the clouds which the last rays of the retiring planet had tinged with a momentary splendour. Whitford placed himself beside her. Neither spoke;—for even the volatile spirit of Gertrude seemed to forget its wings awhile to nestle in the pensive quiet of the twilight.”

“After some minutes contemplation of the scene before him, Whitford said, without changing his position, “I am thinking, Miss Carlton,——” and then checked himself. This abrupt remark, so strangely curtailed, seemed to recall all Gertrude’s gaiety of temper. “There needs no ghost to tell us that,” said the laughing girl. “Well!—what may be the happy cause of a humour so unusual in Mr. Whitford?” Whitford turned:—I was thinking, Miss Carlton,” he said, “whether, when to-morrow’s sun shall set as this does now, every trace of him, who at present sits beside Miss Carlton, will not have faded upon her memory, to be like the very clouds she looks upon,—whose varying colours—varying even while I speak—shall become fainter, and still fainter, till lost entirely in the darkness of night.”.....“Why, Mr. Whitford!” exclaimed the astonished Gertrude, not knowing whether she should laugh or show herself displeased—so serious was the tone in which this singular language was delivered—, “I hope, sir, the planet has not deprived you of your senses!”—and she was rising to depart. “Stay, Miss Carlton!—one moment!——I have expressed myself obscurely. To-morrow morning I must quit your father’s hospitable mansion—perhaps never to return.” There was a slight tremor in his voice, which seemed to have communicated itself to Gertrude’s, as she replied:—“And why, sir, should you leave us so soon? I am sure, Mr. Whitford, my father will not hear without a murmur of any prospect of your quitting him as yet.” ;.....“And so I would believe, Miss Carlton; and, though I have already remained here beyond the time intended—longer, indeed, than mere politeness would

have dictated—, yet I should be loath to quit, even now, a society which has afforded me the truest pleasure I have known since first the sports of boyhood ceased to please me ; but the necessity that bids me depart will admit of no delay.—You may have heard, Miss Carlton, that my father died in the island of Jamaica, leaving there an estate of value. This property I intrusted to the management of one of my father's executors, a man of the strictest honour, and who has conducted in every respect as became my interest. Lately I received news from him, communicating circumstances relative to the estate, which render my presence there of the utmost importance. When I set out to visit my father's oldest friend, I had every thing arranged for my departure to the West Indies. I left orders with a merchant of Liverpool to engage a passage for me in the first vessel that should be ready to sail after the lapse of two months. This morning I received a letter from the merchant ; and before the end of three days I must be in Liverpool. Yes"—he continued, while his voice gradually assumed a tone of tenderness—"Yes, Miss Carlton,—ere long, I shall be far, very far removed from your sight :—may I hope I shall not be equally removed from your memory ? May I hope that when, at the sunset hour, you sit in this window, and look upon a scene like this, one kind thought may wander from the fair prospect before you to seek, upon the distant seas, a trace of him who—who—" Whitford paused from agitation. "Nay"—he added, as he ventured to take the unresisting hand of Gertrude—"Nay, Miss Carlton,—this is no time for hesitation ;—I—I love you, dearest Miss Carlton ! I would not be remembered as—as a mere friend : I would—I—I know not what I say—Speak to me, Miss Carlton ! Gertrude ! dearest Gertrude, will you not answer me ? May I hope——?" She made no reply—the shades of evening were gathered thick around the lovers—and George Whitford

imprinted his first kiss upon the beautiful lips of Gertrude Carlton."

"Mr. Carlton's consent was readily obtained; and the next day Whitford left the Mansion, after obtaining a promise from Gertrude, that the marriage should take place immediately on his return to England."

"About six months after his departure, a stranger arrived at the Mansion with letters of introduction from Whitford. Mr. Carlton, always distinguished for hospitality, did not forget that virtue towards one who he learned, from the letters, was the "bosom friend" of his loved Whitford; and Mr. Osgood was persuaded to extend his visit to a week—then to a fortnight—and then, to three weeks,—while the kind old man filled his house with company to render it the more agreeable. But his guest needed no other inducement to prolong his stay than the society of Gertrude; and—— But why need I linger upon this part of my story? The consequence was, as you, doubtless, already suspect:—Henry Osgood became enamoured of Gertrude, and Gertrude—the fickle Gertrude—listened with pleasure to his vows of love. It is probable that she had never felt any real affection for Whitford, but had betrothed herself to him under the influence of momentary passion. Moreover, her new lover was a man of the rarest beauty of person:—his form was that of an Antinous, and the effeminate softness of his face that of an Adonis: and then he possessed those many little accomplishments which every female loves so much in her admirer, and which, with one of Gertrude's thoughtless character, outweighed all other recommendations;—he danced gracefully, performed upon the flute with exquisite skill, sang well, and had a ready flow of language: while to these pretensions poor Whitford could oppose merely an unblemished reputation, a good heart, a cultivated understanding, and a tolerable person,"

“Mr. Carlton never suspected his daughter ; for in her he saw but perfection : and when his guest took his leave, he invited him to repeat his visit as often as he might find it convenient.”

“After an absence of ten months, Whitford returned to the Mansion to claim the hand of his affianced bride. The old man was for the immediate solemnization of the marriage : Gertrude, of course, requested a delay ; but her father, supposing that her scruples arose from a mere feeling of maidenly delicacy, only laughed at the request, and became more urgent ; and Miss Carlton yielded—fearing that a further opposition of his wishes might lead to a discovery, which she knew would break her father’s heart ; for, to do her justice, Gertrude loved her only parent with a rare affection. Indeed, it was this very virtue that, more than her beauty, had endeared her to the heart of George Whitford.”

“You would ask, perhaps, if there was nothing in the behaviour of his bride to excite suspicion in Whitford’s breast. There was nothing. Gertrude did not regard the marriage union in a light sufficiently serious :—she considered both her lovers as involuntary worshippers at the altar of her beauty, and, as such, she valued them only according to the incense which they offered. Had she had a preference allowed her, there is no doubt the choice would have fallen upon Osgood ; for in the attentions of a man of his personal accomplishments there was more to flatter her vanity than in those of his rival. Feeling, then, no violent attachment to either of her lovers, she was enabled to look with tranquillity upon her approaching marriage ; and whatever regrets she might experience, as she contrasted Whitford with his more attractive rival, she probably subdued by a reflection that her honour was concerned in the fulfilment of her engagement with the former, and by a prospect of the happiness she was about to confer, by that fulfilment, upon the heart of her only and beloved parent. Indeed,

I have reason to believe that many seductions were used by Whitford's traitorous friend to induce Gertrude to elope with him, which she firmly resisted."

"The marriage day soon came; and Osgood, whose behaviour had been sufficiently guarded to give no cause of suspicion to his trusting friend, was to attend as one of the groomsmen."

"About an hour before the ceremony should take place, Osgood, who had been artful enough to persuade Miss Carlton to grant him a private interview, met the unthinking girl, by her own appointment, in a parlour which opened directly upon the lawn, and was but little used. A confidential valet of the former's—the same from whom the unfortunate Whitford afterwards learned these particulars—waited at the door, to guard against surprise. Gertrude was the first to speak, interrupting her deceiver as he was leading her to a seat:—"Mr. Osgood"—she said, in a voice that vainly struggled to be firm—"I have met you here, contrary to the suggestions of prudence and—my honour, because you assured me that your future peace of mind depended on my hearing what you have to say. O, if it is as you have said, and no other hour than this will do to tell it in, speak quickly!—For God's sake!"—she added, when he answered her not—"tell me, quickly—whatever it may be! I dare not stay here—the bridal party is all assembled, and my bridesmaids are waiting for me—perhaps already wondering at my absence,—I must begone! this time is perilous to us both."....."Stay!—one moment longer, I adjure you, Miss Carlton!" cried Osgood, detaining her: then, sinking his voice, "Dear Gertrude!" he began; but Gertrude, both alarmed and offended at this familiarity, sprang from his grasp. "Sir!"—she said, with a dignity unusual to her—"are such the words I must hear from you, when the very marriage garments are on me, in which, in the presence of my God, I must swear fidelity as the wife of another? I will listen no further, sir!"

She was leaving the room ; but Osgood, who had, at first, been somewhat awed by her language and demeanour, instantly recovered himself, and, falling upon his knees beside her, grasped her dress. " Now, or never, Miss Carlton !" he exclaimed : then, lowering his voice, as before, to its most seducing tone, he added—" Will you not listen to me ?——Gertrude !" Gertrude turned, and saw him in the most persuasive attitude of his matchless person, —his beautiful countenance imploring her with looks no woman could resist ;—she turned, and forgot her resolution. " Yes ! hear me, Gertrude !" he said, clasping one of her hands in both of his—" I cannot live and see you wedded to another. Think of my young days wasted by your cruelty ! the ripening hopes, which Ambition is rearing for me, blasted in their budding ! think of my whole life—sapless—shrunk into premature decay—with you to weep above it, when pity is of no avail—when no tears can renew its blossoming, or recall to its withered branches their leafy verdure ! Think—oh, think of the horrors of your own existence ! condemned to linger through the tedious years the wife of a man you cannot love ; forced to submit to his loathed embraces—to smile, when you would rather weep—to call the unwilling lie to your trembling lips to conceal the grief that blights your beauty—to nurse in secret a vain repentance, whose gnawings are upon your very vitals—to find the cheek grow hollow and the eye turn dim, the ruby lip part with its bloom and the rounded arm shrink into meagerness—and, oh, Gertrude ! to welcome with joy these signs of decay, as you watch the last few sands that limit your existence, and long to hasten their tardy dropping !——Think of this !" he added, as he felt the hot tears of his victim rain fast upon his hands—" think of this, my Gertrude, and then contrast to it a life spent with one that loves you—one that you might love in return :—The winged hours fly too swift for your enjoyment ; each day brings with it some new delight ; your very duties be-

come a source of never-failing pleasure : and when your husband smiles to see you happy, and your little children lisp with rosy lips their mother's name, what bliss can equal yours ? The cheek fades not then, dear Gertrude ; nor does the young lip lose its fullness : and, while thus lapped in domestic bliss—your thoughts never straying from your family but to find their dwelling with your God—the sands of life drop all unnoticed ; or if the eye turn to regard their measured passage, it finds with regret they are so few, and the heart sighs as it feels it cannot stay their wasting. With such soft colours would thy years be tinted, dearest Gertrude, wert thou *my* wife !” He rose, and softly whispered “ And shall it not be so, my Gertrude ?”—and the villain dared to press the lips of his friend's affianced wife. Gertrude drew back ; but she did not shudder. “ It cannot be !” she murmured—“ my honour is another's—it is now too late !——I have been here too long already !”—but she did not move. The tempter saw his advantage :—he had touched her imagination : he now sought to undermine her judgment. “ And why can it not be, love ? Tell me, Gertrude, which is the greater crime in the sight of God :—to take upon you vows that your soul abjures, because a promise, wrested in a moment of passion, calls you thus to swear ; or to utter with the lips what the conscience sanctions,—to give the hand where the heart ensures it true ? In the former case, you lead a life of constant deceit—false to the man who has confided to you all his worldly hopes ; in the latter, duty goes hand in hand with pleasure, and, while you confirm your own happiness, you are building up that of another. Nor is it now too late, my Gertrude. Fly with me now, love ! I have two swift horses waiting in the grove ;—my servant will mount one, while I place you before me on the other. Ten minutes' ride brings us to the head of the village, where I have a carriage ready waiting. In an hour, dearest, we shall be beyond the reach of pursuit ; and then——”.....“ No, no !” ex-

claimed the poor girl, while the big tears fell slowly down her ashy cheek—"My poor father! it will kill him!—I cannot go!"—and she wrung her hands in agony. The thought of her parent had nearly rendered naught all that Osgood had effected by his damnable eloquence: but he hastened to recover the ground he had lost. "Not so, dearest Gertrude; it will kill him to see you miserable,—and such you must be as the wife of Whitford. Your father is indulgent; he will easily forgive the short uneasiness your flight may cause him, when I restore you to his arms a happy bride. If Whitford is wealthy, so am I; if he possesses your father's favour, I can gain that father's favour also.—Come, my Gertrude! Let us hasten, love." The poor girl sank upon the shoulder of her beguiler:—Osgood beckoned to the man in waiting. The latter suddenly extinguished the light, threw a cloak over the drooping form of Gertrude, and passed through the door that opened on the lawn; while his master, supporting his lovely burthen, rapidly followed."

"Just as they reached the commencement of the grove, a loud peal of thunder rattled through the sky. Gertrude struggled:—"O, let me turn back!" she cried—"I can go no further! see, the very heavens are against our flight."....."Hush, love!" whispered the false Osgood—"the heavens favour us; for the storm that is brewing will darken our way; and we shall be in safety long before it showers. And now, Gertrude, here are our horses. They are fleet as the winds, love, and will bear us lightly." The man untied the animals: Osgood sprang upon the back of one of them. His servant placed Gertrude before her lover, mounted the other horse, and led the way, at full speed, down one of the avenues."

"In the mean time, the party assembled for the marriage were impatiently awaiting the appearance of the bride and her attendant maidens. Half-an-hour passed, and still they did not come. Mr. Carlton then left the

room, saying he would call them himself,—jesting at the same time upon the “mock delicacy of young girls”—for his heart was filled with joy even to overflowing.”

“Presently the party were alarmed by the cries of the old man, which sounded as from a distant part of the house ; when, on rushing out, they distinguished, as they approached the quarter whence the cries proceeded, the words—“Gertrude ! Gertrude !—Lights here, John, Peter, Andrew ! bring lights !—O, my daughter, my daughter !—Ho, lights here, fellows !—my child’s lost ! she’s lost !—O, Gertrude, my child.—Gertrude ! Gertrude !” The unfortunate father, after searching the rest of the house, had entered the room where the open door betrayed to him his daughter’s flight—though it is probable he had no distinct conception of its motives.”

“Whitford, half-distracted, ordered torches to be lighted ; and, attended by the servants with the lights, the whole party, the females excepted, dispersed itself through the wood.”

“The storm which had been raging for the last half-hour, was now abated ;—the rain had ceased to fall, and the thunder was rolling far off in the troubled heavens. The father and the bridegroom together found the object of their search :—At the foot of a tree lay the dead bodies of Gertrude and her beguiler,—and, at a little distance, the horse that bore them, also dead. They had perished by lightning.”

The baronet paused. He seemed choking with agitation : and, as he had hurried through the catastrophe of his story with so much abruptness, a suspicion crossed my mind that he himself was no other than the hero—the unfortunate George Whitford. This suspicion, however, was instantly rejected as absurd ; for, in the first place, it struck my reason as altogether improbable that any man should wish, or—allowing the wish—should venture to relate the history of his private griefs to an audience of strangers, and then, he had told his story with too much

deliberation to be so deeply concerned in it as my imagination would have made him. I had no time for further thought, as the baronet thus resumed his narrative :—

“The wretched parent was carried back to his house a maniac : but Heaven looked down upon his sufferings, and ere a little month had passed, he reposed beneath the same green turf that lay cold upon the breast of his Gertrude.”

“Thus”—continued Sir James, after a momentary struggle to suppress some emotion—“thus was Mr. Carlton punished for a vicious indulgence of his only child ; Osgood for his treachery to his friend ; Gertrude” (here he fixed his eyes upon the beautiful wife of the preacher with a peculiar intenseness of expression) —“Gertrude—for putting it into the power of an artful villain to seduce her from the reverence due to her plighted faith and to—the feelings of an affectionate parent ; and—”

The baronet stopped abruptly. The fair methodist appeared much agitated :—her lips trembled, and I thought I saw a tear steal from beneath the silken lashes of her downcast eyes ; but, ere it fell, she turned her head aside under pretence of avoiding the fire.—“Strange !”—I reflected.—“What possible connection can there be between *him* and this female ? ‘*To the feelings of an affectionate parent*’ ! Why should he have laid such emphasis upon those words ? and why should she have wept at them ?—It is singular !—very singular !”

“And Whitford—if you will permit me to remark it”—said the sergeant, who, probably supposing that the baronet was about to leave the moral of his tale unfinished, was determined that the company’s good should not suffer for the want of some kind hand to fill up the hiatus—“And Whitford was punished—for being fool enough to trust to the promise of a silly girl, when his soft words and kisses had put her in a state of being not exactly *compos mentis*, and then leaving her for ten months to

smell upon them, as she would a drop of otto of roses on a bit of cotton,—expecting at the end of that time to find the scent as strong as ever, and that he'd nothing to do but to show the girl the bottle to make her long for the whole quantity,—and that too, with a handsome fellow like Osgood talking like an angel in her ears! To my thinking he's the least to be pitied in the whole troop."

Sir James had scarcely patience to hear the sergeant through this philosophical commentary:—"How sir?" he exclaimed, with some asperity: but, instantly softening his tone, "Yes, yes—you are right!" he added—"your remarks are perfectly just, sir; though your manner of expressing them might have been more delicate.—But why should our censure fall upon any of the actors in this mournful tragedy, save the perfidious Osgood? The others, though indeed the victims of their own folly, are more to be pitied than condemned; for their errors were such as human nature, even in its purest state, is most prone to commit;—they were errors of the head and not of the heart; and, while we derive a lesson from their baneful effects, let the weakness of the parent and the indiscretion of the child rest in the quiet mounds where sleep their victims, and the overweening confidence of the lover inhabit no other memory than his own. I have finished my story."*

* Many months after hearing the above story, I had an opportunity of seeing a painting of the catastrophe, which a cousin of Whitford's had caused to be taken, unknown to his relative, by one of the most eminent artists of the day. It represented, stretched at the foot of a tree, a youth and a maiden, apparently dead. The face of the former bore the marks of dreadful agony; but on the beautiful features of the latter not a trace of suffering might be seen, and but for the position of her limbs you might have thought she slept.—At a little distance lay a horse—also dead. He seemed to have fallen without a struggle; for the grass was smooth around him, and his furniture not even shifted from its place.—The head of the female was supported by an old man, who hung over it with a look of intensest anguish:—I almost fancied I could see his lower lip tremble. He seemed to be sinking under the weight of his burthen; yet his left hand was outstretched, as though he wished not only to decline all aid but even to keep it from his sight. The light of a torch, held on the left of the picture, fell upon his face and upon that of the maiden; but the brow and eyes of the old man were shaded by his gray locks as he bent his head downward. On the left of the bodies stood a young man, between two other men, who held down his arms. The torch, which was borne by one of them, threw its light full upon the countenance of the youth. It was on this figure that the painter seemed

I had one objection to the baronet's narrative—in respect of its style. I thought it rather too studied; for though he had addressed himself exclusively to the beautiful Methodist, who was evidently, in despite of her present situation, a woman of education, yet there were six other hearers in the company, and one half of them, at least, could not be supposed to understand many of his allusions.

My host of the Bull did not agree with me. "Well, your honour," he said—rubbing down his knees with that *penè*-circular flourish of the hand which I have seen grooms use when currying a horse—"I think—allow me to say—you have told the pootiest thing I ever heard. Your honour's tale is, for all the world, just like a novel; and, though I don't understand about those Oases, and that *Aunt*—*Aunt* somebody, who was such a handsome woman, and *Donus*, who I suppose was her nephew, yet I like to hear a good thing as well as my betters—allow me to say."

"And I," said Mrs. Spits—while her husband stared in absolute horror to hear her speak—"I like that place so much where the young gentleman kissed the lips of the young lady, when the shades was so thick about 'em! La, it does one so much good to hear of such affectionate things!"—and the tender-hearted Katey licked her lips—being, doubtless, rendered dry by this the longest speech she had been ever known to make.

Her husband was about to reprimand her, when a loud scream, succeeded by two or three groans, issued from

to have chiefly employed his art:—it showed the sublimity of horror. The eyes were fixed and glassy, and starting from their sockets as though they would see more distinctly the object of their gaze—and this object the corse of the female. The mouth was partly open; and the chest you could perceive was raised, as though in the act of inspiration. The rest of the characters were on either side of the picture, behind the principal group. Their figures were thrown completely into shade, except where an occasional ray of light found its way through the intervals between them.

The picture owed much of its interest to the artful disposition of the light, which, derived from the smoky flame of a single torch, fell directly on the centre group—thus giving the surrounding objects a depth of shadow whose effect I have seldom seen equalled.

the kitchen. The guests started from their seats, at a loss what to make of it; but the landlord, pushing aside his chair, rushed in a fury to the door of the kitchen, crying "It's that cursed preacher!" The sergeant, Mrs. Spits, and myself followed him; but the lady, the baronet and the lieutenant remained behind.

When the door was thrown open, a scene presented itself that convulsed me with laughter. In the middle of the floor stood Mr. Snubbs—his little body bent forward so that the face was on a plane with the horizon; while the cook, the chambermaid—or barmaid (for the gifted * Sally acted in both capacities), the stable boy, and the baronet's three servants were prostrate at his feet, after the fashion of Eastern slaves, or in the position in which we often see guns in a ship-yard (the breech elevated and the muzzle to the earth.)

"What's the meaning of all this?" queried my host of the Bull—at the same time executing a movement upon the base of the stable boy, which sent that gentleman's head so forcibly against the legs of the preacher that the latter was lifted from the ground and thrown forward upon the body of the cook, who, rising to relieve herself of the burden, rolled the little man over and over to the feet of the landlord, where he was stopped. At this downfall of their temple the worshippers arose, when, seeing the miserable plight of Malachi, the cook and the barmaid began to groan with much emphasis; but the three men-servants looked rather sheepish, and the stable-boy, whose devotion had been summoned from the upper story to the

* This is a favourite epithet of the day, and is applicable to any person who has any one quality whatsoever. Thus:—a songstress is distinguished for the facility with which she imitates the cries of a starved kitten—and forthwith the journals, in commenting on her performance, say "This *gifted* lady": a certain authoress is noted for nothing but her impudence—and at once our autocritical reviews and lordly magazines announce her to the public. "This *gifted* lady." Now Sally had full as much of a *gift*, in her way, as either of these illustrations:—She could draw beer with a peculiar grace, and rince a chamber, I dare be sworn to it, with a finish all her own. Therefore I say "the *gifted* Sally."

basement by the landlord's loud knocking, retired to a corner to keep up its spirits by rubbing—as we coax a child to good humour by patting its head. My host assisted the preacher to rise, and then assailed him with questions:—

“What's the meaning of this caterwauling among my women? Heh? What's all this groaning about?”

“A shout in the camp of Israel,” answered Mr. Snubbs in full voice, “a great shaking among sinners. Lo, a precious and a sweet season have we had! yea, a time of great refreshing! for the Lord was pleased to grant me great freedom—a gift and power in prayer,—and the souls of precious sinners have been much quickened. Dear sister Sally here has been wonderfully drawn out—she is in a seeking way, and has felt the divine kindling within her,” (sister Sally groaned assent)—“yea, she is as one made drunk with the new wine of the kingdom,—she is visited with the true form of godliness. Be comforted, sister Sally; come, let us be doing.”

“Not so, if you please, Mr. Snubbs,” said our host—who had suffered the preacher to run on in the above manner merely that he might laugh at him. “You're my guest to be sure, Mr. Snubbs; but, for all that,—allow me to say—you are not to be stirring up my gals in this fashion. Come, sir,”—and he drew the reluctant Malachi from the field of his victory, while a deep groan from the bowels of sister Sally sounded the retreat.

“And now,” said our host, when he had restored the preacher to the seat he had left for the kitchen—“And now, Mr. Snubbs, you shall hear something better than preaching; you shall hear—O Lord! you shall hear—one of the best tales you ever heard in your life, though I say it,—a tale that shall make your ears tingle, Mr. Snubbs; O, you shall feel the divine kindling! we shall have a precious and a sweet season!—allow me to say.”

Mr. Snubbs arose in great indignation. “Sinner!” said he—“Do you think I'll stay a moment to listen to

your wicked fictions, which are devices of the devil to snare the feet of the godly—pits laid by the hands of sinful men to make the innocent stumble?—Come, Mary,” he added, addressing his wife with a mildness that astonished me,—“let us leave these sinful men to the blackness of their own hearts. You have been among them too long already, Mary—when you should have left them as I did, and have passed your time in recovering poor sweet souls from the power of the enemy, instead of listening to these snares of the imagination.—Brother Spits—will you light us to our chamber?”

“That I will!” cried our host in great joy—“and a good riddance” (he muttered) “to bad rubbish.” However, Mr. Spits had no sooner lighted the candle than he changed his mind. “No—now I think of it—my wife ’ll be better—she can help the lady undress. Here wife!—Mrs. Spits! Mrs. Spits!” The obedient Mrs. Spits came running from the kitchen, where, probably, she had been restoring order. “O! Katey, my dear—show Mr. Snubbs and *this lady* to their room—No. 3 you know, my dear.—Pleasant dreams to you, madam” (bowing respectfully to the lady); “a time of great refreshing to you, Mr. Snubbs” (mimicking the preacher.)

“My God!” exclaimed our host, when Mr. Snubbs and his wife had left the room—“Did ever any body see the like afore? Such a withered, wrinkled, freckled little runt of a Methodist parson to be husband of such a lady! for lady I’ll swear she is afore any court of England; for I never saw such a sort of an air as she has got in all my life afore—and I’ve seen many a lady in my time—allow me to say. Well! there’s no accounting for such things—and matches are made in heaven they say—O Lord! O Lord! I only wish they’d coupled me to such another bit of flesh instead of my Katey!—though, for that matter, Katey’s a good enough sort of a woman too, and as tidy a housekeeper as e’er a woman in all England, though I say it that should’nt say it—allow me to say.”

"It is certainly very singular," said the lieutenant, "that a woman of that lady's appearance should have matched with such a man as Snubbs. Those fellows, however, have great power over the hearts of females. I know an instance that lately happened in London :—A young lady of great gaiety of disposition, and particularly fond of dress, was induced, by one of her friends, to attend a prayer-meeting at a house where one of these itinerant preachers was staying for a time.—The man, however, was not a Methodist.—She went for the sake of amusement; but the exhortations of the preacher so wrought upon her, that, on her return home, she threw all her laces and jewels into the fire—cut off her hair, of which she had been very vain, close to the crown—put on a cap—and transformed herself at once into a devotee. 'Gad! I wish I understood the trick—I'd make it serve me with the fair to some purpose.'"

The baronet, to whom the first part of these remarks had been addressed—though indirectly—kept his eyes fixed upon the fire, and made no reply.

The sergeant now prepared to take up the discourse, but, before he could get under weigh, Mrs. Spits came running in, with a countenance full of news. "Well, if I ever seed the like!" she exclaimed, almost out of breath,— "such a lady! Be she Mrs. Snubbs or not, she's the most handsomest, angely, beautifulest lady I ever laid my born eyes upon, or ever 'ud wish to!" Here she paused, quite out of breath

"Take time, Katey, my dear," said her husband— "don't choke yourself. Why, I never heard you talk so much since I first courted you! you've the divine kindling I see: but don't let it burn your tongue off, Katey."

"O, husband, husband!"

"Well, Mrs. Spits—what is it?"

"O, husband! she's no more fit to be the wife of that nasty little parson than I be!—She's the kindest, and best naturdest lady I ever served in my life!—Only think what

she said !—Said she—when I offered to unpin her gown—says I “ My lady, shall I pull off your ladyship’s things ?”—for I couldn’t ’ve helped calling her my ladyship if I’d ’ve died for it,—and so she says to me—says she—in the sweetest voice—it did me so much good ! O—O !”

“ Take time, Katey—don’t choke yourself.”

“ Said she—“ No, thankee, my good woman—I shall do very well without your cisterns ”—(though I hadn’t offered her our cistern at all—yet she’s welcome to as much water as she wants, for all that)—and then she slipt me a crown—though I didn’t want it I’m sure : but then she’s got the whitest hands I ever seed in my life—and with sich long, thin fingers—and sich nails ! O, it would do any gentleman’s heart good to get one look at the nails only ! They’re the pinkest, and the whitest, and the most—I’m sure I could ’ve sucked them, that I could !”

Well, Katey my dear—that ’ll do ; you’ve said quite enough—quite enough, Mrs. Spits.”—And Katey was silent.

“ Landlord,” said the baronet, “ I’ll thank you to show me my apartment.”

My host stared, but said nothing, and did as he was desired. No sooner had the baronet turned his back than the sergeant began to abuse him :—“ He’s a damned handsome fellow, to be sure, that same Sir James Maitland ; but, he might have been a little more civil to officers, for all that. Here have we been listening to his long-winded stories, about the devil know’s what all, in the greatest patience ; and then, just as we are ready to tell ours, my gentleman jumps up, and leaves us in the lurch !—Damned uncivil that !”

“ Didn’t you relish the baronet’s story, Splint ?” asked the lieutenant.

“ Why—O—Yes, to be sure !—But what of that ?”

“ Well, then ! hold your jaw, and say no more about it,” said the lieutenant.

"Now, I'm of Mr. Splint's opinion," said our host, who had just returned; "I think—allow me to say—though the baronet is, of course, very much of the gentleman —"

"Stop your impudence, Mr. Spits," said the lieutenant—"There's more custom coming for you." And, indeed, the sound of wheels might be distinctly heard rattling up the yard.

"More custom?" shouted Mr. Spits—"By the Lord, what a lucky night it is! *Very stormy, much wind—* Bob! Bob! company!—to the gate, you rascal!—Mrs. Spits! Katey!—here's more company!—*accompanied with great devastation—*make haste, Bob!"

"What ho, within there, bully host!" thundered a tremendous voice at the door, "send forth your boy to me, or I'll blow—Ah, you're come, my little dungfork!—There."

"O, it's that madcap actor Tom Drammer!" said my landlord, very deliberately poking the fire—"He can come in without my help." And so it seemed; for the door was now kicked open with considerable violence, and the actor entered the room—a man over six feet in height, very slender, and, in dress, half blackguard, half gentleman. His first salutation was somewhat singular:—

"Rumble thy belley-full! Spit, fire! spout, rain!"

Hell, what a night!

————— the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves;

Ha, my bully host! is that you warming your bandy legs by the fire? How dost thou, my cock?—Come, stir about; let's have a peep at thy ruby face, my man with the nose!"—and seizing Mr. Spits by the hair of the head with one hand, he gave him a blow on the cheek with the other that made the poor fellow bellow most lustily.

"Ha, well done, Johnny Spits!" roared the actor—"Thou keep the Bull! Why, man, thou art the bull himself!—Heh! we shall have the cows running in presently, if thou bellowest so merrily! ha, ha, ha!"

"It does well enough for you to laugh, Mr. Drammer," whimpered the host; "but I guess you'd beller too, if I was to hit you such a slap in the face."

"Damme, but thou'rt welcome, man, an thou canst reach me!" exclaimed the actor. "Come, come,—stop your pipes, John; you had need of my little correction. Why, man, do you pretend to keep an inn, and yet sit stewing away your fat sides by the fire, while your company is shivering at the gate?—and such a night as this, too? Why,

Since I was man
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard;—

Why, thou deservest to have that blossom-bearing nose of thine made into sauce, thou paunch!—Come, John, you must forgive my love-taps; for I'm going to stay with thee all night, man, and spend like a prince—eh! does that quiet thee?"

"To be sure it does!" said Johnny, resuming his good humour—"and you shall fare like a prince, too, or my name isn't John Spits, sign of the Bull!—only, you know I like gentlemen to be a little more quieter or so—and you know, Mr. Drammer, you're apt to be a little boisterious or so. However, we must forgit and forgive, as you say,—and so let me introduce you to my good friends here, and we'll spend a jovial night together." And the rascal, with an impudence that made even the sergeant stare, leading his new guest to each one of us in turn, introduced him with great ceremony:—"This, sir, is Lieutenant Rattle—and this, Sergeant Splint—and this, Mr. Lewis—all my particular friends."

“Lieutenant Rattle, your servant, sir: Sergeant Splint, your most obedient: Mr. Levis, your’s till death.—Fetch us some ale, and be damned, bully landlord!”—and the actor, throwing himself into a chair, spread out his long legs before the fire, and began to hum one of the fool’s songs in *Lear*:—

“He that has a little tiny wit,—
With beigh, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit;
For the rain it raineth every day.”

“Did you ever see such an impudent rascal as this host of our’s?” whispered the lieutenant to me: “Now, if you like, I’ll set Splint to punish him in a way that he shan’t forget our company for some time.—Here, Splint—bring your head close to ours.” Splint came within whispering distance. “Hark you, Splint,” said the lieutenant,—“manage to introduce your knock-down song to-night, and sew up that Spits till he can’t stir. You understand me?”.....“Aye, aye,” answered Splint, with a chuckle—“I’ll wax him, in spite of his rummy nose,—let me alone for that.”

The ale was now brought, and set upon the table. “Gentlemen,” said the actor—addressing us with a courtesy of manner that I could hardly have expected from the previous roughness of his behaviour—“since the wind and rain have thrown us together, whether we would or not, and my host here has taken it upon him to make us acquainted, what say you—shall we spend the night in merriment? There’s nothing like a frolic on a cold, stormy night,—the wind, in my opinion, is the best music we can have for a drinking song. Come, gentlemen—throw aside all ceremony, and do me the honour of partaking of my ale.”

The lieutenant whispered me, “He’s a good enough fellow in the main, I’ll be sworn to it!” and then added, aloud, “I, for my part, sir, shall be very happy to be on

terms of good fellowship with you,—and I dare say Mr. Levis is similarly disposed.”

“Certainly,” said I; for what else could I say?

“Then, by ——,” cried the sergeant, “we’ll all be merry together!”

“That’s a jolly dog!” said the actor, grasping Splint’s hand. “And now, gentlemen, one thing more:—Suppose we admit this pot-bellied rascal” (striking Spits in the paunch) “to a share of the evening’s-amusement? though no Samson, he can make sport for us; and, the moment he gets troublesome, you know we can kick him out of the room without ceremony.”

The lieutenant now threw off his sober mask entirely, and showed himself, what I suspected him to be, a true lover of jollity, in whatever dress she might present herself. He jumped up from his chair, swore a string of oaths, and proposed that our host should sit as “chairman” at the board. The actor, though he did not understand the jest, gave his vote for the election, and Mr. Spits was duly installed.

“Now, Spits,” said the actor, “bring your mug, and take your seat, you rascal.—But, perhaps, gentlemen,” (turning to us) “you do not like ale? For my part, I prefer it to any thing in the drinking way. I can say with Tom Warton”—and, flourishing his mug, he spouted in true theatrical style:—

“Balm of my cares, sweet solace of my toils,
Hail, juice benignant! O’er the costly cups
Of riot-stirring wine, unwholesome draught,
Let pride’s loose sons prolong the wasteful night;
My sober ev’ning let the tankard bless!”

I looked at the actor’s meagre form, and set it down that the man was lying—lying from pride. I had no doubt that his palate preferred the grape, while his pocket recommended hops. “Very true, Mr. Drammer!” said I; “we all love ale, undoubtedly, and will help you to empty your tankard; but, after this bout, you’ll permit

me to furnish the table with wine—for, you'll allow, though ale is very companionable, wine is more mirthful." The actor's eye sparkled as I made the motion. "Well," he said,—“on the condition of your partaking first of my favourite beverage, I will do you reason in yours.”..... “Hark-ye, Mr. Levis,” whispered the lieutenant—at the same time pressing my hand under the table—“I see what you're up to; but damn me if I have any thing to do with the matter unless you consent to let me bear half the expense!—Come, come—no nonsense!”.....“Well, Mr. Rattle—if it must be?”.....“Then we're agreed.—And now, gentlemen, a song!” added the lieutenant aloud.

“A song!” echoed Splint, setting down his mug.

“A song, gentlemen!” roared the actor, knocking the table.

“Stop a moment, gentlemen!” said our host—“We'll have no singing yet awhile—allow me to say; I haven't told my tale yet.”

“Psha! don't mention it,” cried Rattle.

“Yes, but I'm chairman, gentlemen! I'm chairman! allow me to say—and my tale must be told; it wont keep any longer; it's a very short one.”

“Put it in your pocket, then,” said Splint.

“But it's very short, gentlemen—”

“Well then, you can wind it up quickly—and see that you do it. Come—at it at once!”

We all faced the fire again; and Mr. Spits—first hemming to clear his throat—threw his right leg over his left, spread his right hand on his breast, and, bowing low to the audience, began:—

“Once upon a time ——”

“There was a certain king,” said Splint.

“Gentlemen,” said our host with great seriousness, “I shall resign my seat as chairman of this meeting, if there's not more order deserved—allow me to say.” And Mr. Spits uncrossed his legs, and put the left one uppermost.

"Shame, gentlemen!" cried the actor, with a rigidity of muscle that I envied—"Let our chairman proceed."

"Gentlemen, are you ready?" asked Mr. Spits. The question was decided in the affirmative. "Well then," said Mr. Spits—again uncrossing his legs, and restoring the right one to its former supremacy—"I shall precede to business.—Hem! once upon a time—I had a grandfather—that was afore I was born though. He was a very clever little man, just like myself they say, though I say it, and lived among the hills in Wales. So, as he was very poor, he said to his wife one day—says he, "Polly,"—my grandmother's name was Polly, mind you; and a very nice woman she was too, allow me to say—says he, "Polly, my dear, I'm thinking as how, if we don't contrive some other way to fill our bellies, we shall have nothing to put in them, as sure as my name is Spits."..... "Sure enough, Tony,"—my grandfather's name was Tony, you must know, gentlemen—"Sure enough, Tony," said my grandmother; "for I don't see how we're going to get along this way."....."Well then, Polly, my dear, suppose we set up a little sort of a shop—a kind of half-way house—here among the hills, where travellers can stop and drink a bit," said my grandfather....."Sure enough, Tony," said my grandmother. And so they set it up—not such a nice tavern as the Bull is here, gentlemen; for they had'nt such accommodations——"

"Damn your accommodations!" said Splint, "drive on your grandad."

"Gentlemen," said our host, with lordly indignation, "I repeal if this is not against all order and presidents?"

"Then don't make such a rigmarole work of your grandad's tavern," said Splint,—“or we'll sing, in spite of your teeth—nose I should say, Mr. Spits."

"Well," continued Mr. Spits, "they set up this little inn; and, to be sure, they began to get along very well; for it was stuck just in a snug little valley, where the different roads all met before they cut their ways through

the hills in one ; and they had a good deal of custom, had my grandparents. Well—one afternoon—something such as this—the thunder came roaring among the black hills, just like a great bear—and the winds danced and capered about, as though they would blow the hills up—and the lightning flashed blue, and green, and red, and a thousand different colours—and the rain came splashing and splashing, as if old Noah had come again, and was going to turn all the world into fishes. “A dreadful night this, Polly !” said my grandfather, as he drew his chair near the kitchen-fire, and lighted his pipe. “Aye—I pity the poor creatures that are out in this shower,” said my grandmother, as she spread her apron on her lap and prepared to take comfort. “I wish they’d come to take shelter with us.”.....“Certainly, Polly,” says my grandfather, puffing the smoke in my grandmother’s face—for the old lady loved a puff now and then, as well as e’er an old smoker among them—: “and Lord, there’s some one now !” says my grandfather, flinging his pipe in the fire, and running to the door :—and, sure enough, in comes a nice young gentleman—about your age, Mr. Levis—with nothing but a great big dog behind him. “Welcome, your honour,” said my grandfather, “—I’m happy to see your honour ;”—for my grandfather was a very polite-some man—just like myself, though I say it : he knew what was what, and never spared words ; for he used to say to his wife—“Polly,” said he, “always be civil ; for you know that costs nothing, and saves whiskey.”—“My good man,” said the young gentleman, “I wish you’d hurry out to my horse : I’ve hitched him under your shed. I shall stay till this shower is over !”.....“Very well,” says my grandfather Tony, “I shall be happy to serve your honour”—for he was a very polite-some man, as I have said—. “Polly, take care of the gentleman till I return.” Well—and so the gentleman he sat down by the fire, and his dog sat down too. “Poor Rock !” said the gentleman, patting his dog—“You are

glad to get near the fire, my dog.”—and the dog knocked his great tail on the hearth, and looked so pleased—my grandmother said if ever dog spoke that dog did, as sure as there was hair on his tail.—And so the gentleman pulled off his coat, and my grandmother hung it by the fire to dry. “And where may your honour be going—if I may be so bold—?” said my grandfather.—He was a very civil man, and never asked questions, like some people.—“I guess you are going to the great house yonder,” said my grandfather. “I am,” said the gentleman; “and my servant has left me to find my way alone. The scoundrel ran away from me, with my portmanteau, this morning. However, Rock and I can travel very well without him—can’t we, my dog?”—and the dog knocked his tail again, and said yes—that is, he barked—for he was a wonderful dog, this Rock. “I will guide your honour, if you like, sir,” said my grandfather. “No, no,” said the gentleman, “I have often travelled the road before, and can easily find it,—it’s only five miles you know.”.....“True, your honour,” said my grandfather: and then he got something for the gentleman to eat and drink; for, though the gentleman paid for it like a prince, yet my grandfather said he would have gave it for nothing—he was such a sweet, braye-looking, merry young gentleman—“and so handsome,” said my grandmother. Well—don’t be impatient, gentlemen; I’m coming to the cream of the story now—. Well—so the gentleman set out again, though it was nearly dark, and Rock followed at his heels—for the shower was all over. Bym-by, my grandfather says to my grandmother—“Polly, my dear,” says he, “let’s go to bed; for nobody ’ll be along now.”.....“Sure enough,” said my grandmother—for she was just such another as my Katey here, and never talked more than was decent for a woman—“Sure enough,” said my grandmother. And so they went to bed. Well—in a little while, my grandfather jogs his wife, who was fast asleep. “Polly,” says

he. "Well," says she, "Tony."....."Polly, my dear, don't you hear a noise?"....."No, Tony," says she. "I'm sure you must," says my grandfather: "only listen!—I'm sure I hear that gentleman's dog whining and scratching at the door."....."Sure enough," said my grandmother.—"I hope he has n't come to harm, bless his handsome face!"....."I'll get up and look," says my grandfather. "O, don't!" said my grandmother—for she was a timid creature. "Yes I will," says my grandfather, says he,—for he did n't like opposition. And so he opens the window; and there, sure enough, was the dog—pawing, and scratching, and whining at the door. My grandmother said he whined just like a sick child—it was so awful. And my grandfather opened the door to let the dog in: but no! he would n't come, all he could do; but whined, and pulled my grandfather's shirt—for he was just as he got out of bed—, and then ran a little ways off, and then came back again. "I'll be sworn," said my grandfather, "he wants me to go with him!—I'll try him." And my grandfather pretended to be going—and the dog looked so pleased, and ran on before: but, when he found my grandfather would'nt follow, he set up such a pitiesome howl it was shocking to hear. "I'm sure," says my grandfather, "something is wrong!—I'm afraid the gentleman is murdered; for," says he, "I've heard of such things afore."....."God save us!" said my grandmother, and began to cry—for she had a tender heart, had my grandmother. "I'll dress myself, and go and see," said my grandfather. "O don't, for mercy-sake, Tony!" said my grandmother; "they'll kill and murder you, if you do."....."Out, woman!" said my grandfather—for he was a brave man, and didn't fear the devil himself—"Out, woman!" says he, "it's my duty."....."O, they'll ravish you!" said my grandmother."Psha!" says he, "who'd ravish such a poor devil as I am!—I *will* go, wife; so say nothing more about it." All this time, the dog kept looking on silent, and seemed to understand what they were saying; and, when my

grandfather began to dress himself, he wagged his tail, and looked so delighted. "There! look at the dumb beast!" says my grandfather—"wouldn't it be a shame to let such a creature know his duty better than a Christian man?—Shame, Polly Spits! shame on ye!"....."O, but Tony, they'll murder me! I daresn't stay alone!"....."Lock the door," said my grandfather; and, lighting a lantern, he took his gun in his hand, and followed the dog—who capered before him, every now and then turning back to hurry him. "Go on!" said my grandfather,—“Go on, poor faithful creature! I'll follow you.” Well, the dog led him about two miles; and then he stopped before a small thicket, and began to growl, and whine. My grandfather understood him;—he wanted him to go in; but my grandfather couldn't,—and so, he patted the dog, and coaxed him, and at last the dog ran in, and drew out a handkerchief all bloody, and a hat which my grandfather was sure was the same the gentleman had worn. So my grandfather, trembling—though he was a brave man—set down his light, and putting aside the bushes with his gun, he saw—the poor young gentleman lying dead, and his face all scratched and bloody, and so awful!—my grandfather couldn't look any longer, but ran out. He thought now what he should do—and then he remembered the gentleman said he was going up to the great house—where a very rich family lived—, and he thought that, as the house was but three miles, and his own two, he might as well go to the first: so—don't be impatient, gentlemen—so, patting the dog, he went forward, and the dog, who seemed to know what he was about, followed without any scruples. Well—and when my grandfather came to the great house, he found the family was not yet in bed—for it was very early—, and he told his story—and first they were going to take him for the murderer—but the dog began to caress him so, that the great gentleman said, "Let the man alone! Don't you see he is innocent by poor Rock's caressing him so?"—

for they knew the dog at once—his master was a relation of the family's. Well—the gentleman and his servant set out—and they came to the place, and found the poor young man. There was a great hole in his head, as if he had been shot, and his pockets were stripped of every farthing. And, further in the wood, they found the horse, stabbed and cut in a shocking manner. Well—so they took the body of the gentleman home—and great rewards were advertized for the young gentleman's servant—for he was suspected at once—but they couldn't find him—no where. Well—Rock wouldn't leave my grandfather, when they wanted to take him ; and so the gentleman said to my grandfather—says he, " Keep him ; and may he be as faithful to you as he was to his poor master," says he—and my grandfather cried like a child, and hugged poor Rock—and Rock hugged him too, and whined—and my grandfather took the dog home. Well—a year afterwards—on just such a night as when the poor young gentleman had come to the inn—only this was in the night-time, when my grandfather was going to bed—Well, on this stormy night, a man rode up to the door, and called out, in a rough voice, for a large glass of whiskey. He said he couldn't stop, and had to ride a great ways before morning. He had a large hat drawn over his eyes and a handkerchief round his neck—and, when he drank, he turned his head aside ; and, besides, he swore such terrible oaths !—my grandmother said she never heard the like afore. Well, this man was handing back the cup, when Rock sprang from the house with a tremendous howl, and grasped the man's leg with his teeth. " Down, Rock !" said my grandfather ; but Rock wouldn't down ; and the man, screaming like a woman—as my grandmother said, at the dog's name more than his bite—, put his hand in his bosom, and drew out a pistol ; but, before he could fire it, the horse, becoming restif like at the dog's pulling and barking, plunged, and threw the man over. Rock, caught him by the throat—

and my grandfather couldn't pull him off, all he could do. Then my grandfather began to suspect this must be the murderer, and called to my grandmother to bring him a rope to tie him before he took off the dog. But, when the rope came, it was too late ;—the man was black in the face—and dead ;—Rock had choked him. "What shall we do now ?" said my grandmother ; "We shall all be hung !"....."Run to the great house," says my grandfather, "and tell them to send down somebody ; for we think we've got the murderer. Don't say he's dead though !" And so my grandmother went ; and, presently, came the servants, and the gentleman himself ; and the gentleman, at once, knew the man ;—it was the servant of the young gentleman who had been murdered. Well, and——"

"Well, that'll do," said the lieutenant. "Your story does you credit, Mr. Spits :—You have employed fewer words, by half, than I expected from your long tongue."

"But I haven't finished yet—the best part of it—" said Mr. Spits.

"O ! we'll let you keep that for yourself, Mr. Spits," said Splint,—"we're well satisfied with our own share."

"But how comes it," inquired the actor, "that the dog suffered the man to murder his master so easily—seeing he was so powerful an animal ?"

"Well, now you see !" said our important host—"if you would only let me tell my story as I'd wish—but you're always so impatient !—Well—you must know that was the very question the gentleman at the great house asked ; but they examined the wound, and, finding it was a gun-shot, they supposed the man had shot him as he rode along, and then robbed him while the dog was whining at my grandfather's for assistance.—Well ! the gentleman gave my grandfather the reward, which he had offered for the murderer. It was three hundred guineas. And with that my grandfather came and settled in this part of England : and so, when he died——"

“The worms got him, I suppose,” said Splint. “Damn him, let him rest!—And now for a song!”

During the latter part of my host's story, I was seated in an oblique direction to the fire-place—so that, while I gave my attention to my host, who, with his usual impudence, had placed his chair in the chimney-corner, I could see whatever might be passing in the rest of the room.—But, that the reader may the better comprehend what I have to tell him, I will describe the room wherein our company was assembled. It was in shape a parallelogram, with the fire-place close to the northeast corner. From the middle an open staircase led to the apartments above; and along either side of the staircase ran a narrow passage, into which the parlours opened. One of these passages terminated in a little closet, occupied by my host himself as a bed-chamber. On the right, or east side of the bar-room, within two yards of the fire-place, was another passage, which led to the baronet's apartment; and, on the left, or west side, was the kitchen.—

Well—as my host would say—*Well, gentlemen*,—being seated as I have said, I observed Mr. Snubbs steal cautiously down the staircase, and make his way on tiptoe to the kitchen. I suffered him to believe himself unnoticed: the moment, however, he had effected his object, I betrayed him to the party. Our host was just opening his lips in opposition to Mr. Splint's call for a song; but, when he heard of the preacher's dexterity, he forgot his rights as chairman:—“The rascal!” he exclaimed—“I'll teach him to be quickening my women! I'll——”

“Stop, Mr. Landlord!” said I—“let us first listen at the door, and learn the secret of his eloquence.”

“Agreed!” cried the lieutenant, the sergeant, and the actor, all in a breath.

“Well, gentlemen!” said the chairman, gracefully waving his hand—“since the majority is in favour of the motion, I've nothing to say.”

Stealing, then, cautiously to the door of the kitchen, we applied our ears, and overheard the following pithy discourse from the musical mouth of Malachi :——

“ O, dear sinners ! let there be no backslidings among you ! let not the enemy find a nook in all your bodies, whereby he may enter and drive out the blessed spirit ! be up and doing at the glorious work, till you feel the true faith of assurance, and may cry, “ O, poor devil ! you are afraid of your kingdom ! ” Think what awaits you if you indulge in all the carnal rioting, and swearing, and drinking, and other damnable contrivances of the enemy of so-ul-s ! You know there is a heaven, blessed sinners ? You know there is another place—a hell ? Well—where must the righteous go ? where, I say, shall they go, who are doing and diligent at the Lord’s bidding ? To heaven—must they not ? Yea !—And where can the others go ? Can they go to heaven too ? No-a ! Will not the good people, that are there, stand at the great folding-doors, and say to the Lord, “ Don’t let those ere fellers come up here ? ” Ye-es ! Well—and what then ? —What, I say, will the Lord say to them ? Why—“ Go to hell ! ” at once.”—Here the audience, I mean those within the kitchen—began to groan from the very pit of their stomachs ; and the preacher, encouraged by these tokens of conviction, proceeded with increased warmth. —“ Yes, sinners ! now is the time ! Strike while the iron is yet hot ! Let not your faith grow cool ! Throw—throw off all the damnable trickings of the enemy of your souls ! he that goes about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and chaw—yea ! chaw to atoms—in his enormous throat ! Throw off, I say, all the trappings of slavery to him ! Let your work stand ! pray unceasingly ! mind not your earthly masters ; for what say they ? “ Do my bidding ! ”—but the Lord says “ Do *my* bidding ! ”—and which will you mind ? Surely, when hell, and the hot—boiling hot—lake of damna-tion is y-aw-aw-ning for you—where liquid sulphur is bubbling

for ever and ever—and the smoke chokes the groans and gnashings of the damned—and the devils, with huge indgines for tormenting them, run them through the body, or fix them on burning stakes, or tear out their melting hearts and quivering entrails——” (The groanings recommenced.) “There, where all is pain everlasting—pain unquenchable—pain to all eternity—Mind not your master, I say! let alone your work!——”*

Here the landlord burst open the door in a rage. “Come out!” he exclaimed to the preacher—“Come out, you infernal——! Is this the way you stir up my women? Come out!”—and taking Snubbs by the collar he drew him out of the room; while the converts—excepting, as before, the three men-servants of the baronet, and the stable-boy (who probably retained some unpleasant recollections of the delicacy of the part where his honour was seated)—set up a groaning that surpassed, for musical compass, any thing of the kind I had ever heard. “Here Katey! put those women in order!” cried the incensed Mr. Spits—while the pimples on his nose actually turned blue—“Let them see whether they’re to mind their master or not!” Katey entered the kitchen: Mr. Spits shut the

* In justice to my own character, I must subjoin a note to this passage.—— I would not be suspected of implety; for, though not what is called a *religious* man, I flatter myself I have ever shown, as felt, a deep and unwavering reverence for true religion and Christianity. The class of men I ridicule is, in my opinion, of the worst of enemies that real morality has to dread. Those, to whom are known these pedlers of the false wares that are so often palmed upon the ignorant as the manufacture of religion, will do me the justice to allow, that, far from heightening the colours of the picture I venture to present, I have sunk many striking points into shadow, lest I should offend the scruples of some among my readers. Nor would I be accused of wishing to affix ridicule upon any particular denomination of Christians; though the Reverend Mr. Snubbs is long since dead, his counterparts are to be found in every sect that has come under my observation.

Let me add:—that, were the age in which I write other than it is, I should have scorned to make this defence; for I should have felt a confidence, that, while the moral of my writing was approved, the language in which I had sought to render it efficient would be acknowledged as delicate as it was possible to make it without destroying all its truth and spirit: but, at this day, when he who carries his religion at the end of his tongue is allowed to preach down his neighbour who has not the art of making so little a vehicle bear about in safety a burden so precious, or who holds too sacred the ark of his piety to leave it thus without a shelter, did I not stoop to explain myself, my character and the pockets of my worthy publishers would be sure to suffer.

door upon her, and then drawing the unfortunate Malachi into the middle of the bar-room assailed him after this manner :—

“Look you, Mr. Malachi Snubbs!—you see I happen to be John Spits that keep this house, sign of the Bull; and though I’m happy to treat my customers as customers ought to be treated—that is, when they pay their bills—for, by the Lord, Mr. Snubbs! was I once to think you had no money, I’d put you out of my house in an instant, and you might lay there till your wife, who’s another sort of a woman, was pleased to git up; for I’m an honest man, and pay my rent, and a’n’t to have no beggars sponging upon me.—Well, you see, Mr. Snubbs, though I’m happy to treat you well, yet you’re not to be going into my kitchen, no more than these gentlemen, corrupting my gals—and——Who bid you go in my kitchen, you monkey-faced——?”

“The Lord,” answered Mr. Snubbs with the utmost composure.

“Blasphemer!” cried the lieutenant.

“It was my old acquaintance, the pretty charbermaid, that bade you,” added the actor.

Mr. Snubbs faced the last speaker (for the landlord, in the warmth of his reproaches, had removed his hand from the preacher’s collar.) “Poor sinner!” said he, in a manner very different from any I had yet seen him assume—“I forgive you your filthy accusation; for it isn’t you that say it, but the devil within you, who has possession of your soul, and who is enraged that a minister of the Lord ——”

“You a minister of the Lord!” roared Mr. Drammer—“By the bones of Will Shakspeare, I’m as good a minister as you are, at any time, Jack Priest!”—and, at once assuming the snuffle and bodily contortions of Mr. Snubbs, he began to mimic his language :—“Brother sinner! are you not ashamed to reproach, with backslidings and a filthy inclining to the works of the devil, one who has felt

the divine kindling of the spirit even unto the blessed faith of assurance? I see there is a falling off! I see you lack the means of grace—and are as a brand snatched from the burning, which falleth into the fire again, and is utterly consumed—yea, even to the last atom!—Ha! dost thou stare, sir priest? If I am too tall for thee to see me, brother, lo! I will exalt thee.”—And, seizing poor Malachi by the shoulders, he, with a strength surprising in one of so slender a frame, lifted him up till the little man’s face was on a line with his own. “Now look thy fill,” he cried,—“Bo!” (blowing as children do when they try to frighten one another in the dark), and let him drop with so much violence, that the poor devil staggered into the arms of my host, who bade him go to bed directly and think how he should pay his bill in the morning. The reverend gentleman thought it best to show obedience, and, accordingly, sneaked up stairs to his own room.

I must say, when I saw poor Saubbs so roughly handled I began to feel some little remorse for the part I had taken in his persecution; for it struck me that the man could have no other motive, for exposing himself to treatment so contemptuous, than the cause of religion, and that therefore he was rather to be pitied than abused, if, in his mistaken zeal, he went to greater lengths than was necessary. However, my qualms were but momentary; for as they had their birth with the preacher’s elevation into the arms of the actor, so they died as the last laugh of my associates followed his retreating figure.

“Now, host,” I cried, “let us have your best wine—and in plenty!”

Gladly my host obeyed; and the wine was set on the table.

“And now for a song!” exclaimed Splint, as he eyed the sparkle of his glass preparatively to tipping its contents down his throat.

“No! not till you’ve told your story,” said my host in a tone of authority.

"You get no story from me to night," responded Splint—raising his glass slowly towards his dromedary nose.

"Then you get no song!" said my host—planting his foot firmly against the pan of the grate, and driving his hands into the pockets of his breeches.

"Well—it must be a short one then?" half queried Splint—as he moved his glass, with the lingering relish of a connoisseur, from one nostril to the other.

"Agreed!" cried Spits—in the tone in which a man in an argument tries to smother his joy when his opponent has unexpectedly yielded by means of a compromise.

"Well then, here goes!" exclaimed the sergeant; and he emptied the wine, at one mouthful, down his throat of leather.

The actor, who had suffered the host to fight his battle out with Splint, probably in the expectation of its terminating in favour of the latter, prepared to interfere; but the lieutenant whispered him, "Let Splint alone; it will be short enough, I'll answer for it!"—and Splint was suffered to begin his story.

"You must know then," said Splint—"But what's my story to be about?"

"A battle," said my landlord, "of course."

"Well—so be it. I was standing, then, in the front rank at some confounded engagement or other—the name has slipped my memory—when I saw a fellow among the enemy take aim at my navel and apply the match to his cannon. So I watched, and just as the ball came skipping along I opened my legs—when it passed through, cutting off the lower members of three general officers who were behind me. "Neatly done!" said my colonel, who was standing at my left hand—and, as the word escaped him, his head fell bounding at my feet. I had just time to kick it out of the way, when a huge Goliath came up on horse-back with his sword drawn. He aimed a cut at my nose; but the bone was so hard that the weapon struck fire, burnt off my left whisker, and turning of one side slit

open my cheek—leaving the ugly scar you see there. “Damn your nose!” cried the fellow in a rage, and drawing a devil of a pistol from his holster, shot me through the upper part of my mouth—which has given me the appearance of a hare-lip, as you see—though any fool might know, by the little round hole at the top of the gash, that it was done by a pistol-ball. However, I caught the bullet in my teeth, and, as the enemy attempted to ride me down, spit it in his face. “Don’t be in such a hurry,” said I, “my fine fellow!”—and, slipping between the fore-paws of his horse, just as they were closing about my neck, I overthrew both horse and rider; then, deliberately cutting off the rascal’s head, as he lay entangled in the reins, I slung it round my neck, by putting a handkerchief into the mouth and drawing it through the windpipe, and mounting his horse, “It’s an ill wind,” cried I, “that blows nobody good!” and plunged into the thickest of the battle—where I made such havoc that the enemy stopped to cry, as I passed, “There goes Death upon the pale horse!” My colonel was so pleased that he said to me “Splint, you rascal,” says he, “if you were a gentleman I’d give you my place on the spot. As it is, I must keep it myself—but I’ll make you a sergeant.” So I went to bed, that night, Sergeant Splint.—*I have finished my story.*”

“Yes; but I’m afraid it a’n’t true, Mr. Splint,” said my landlord; “so allow me to say——”

“We’ll allow you no such thing,” cried the lieutenant—clapping his hand upon the mouth of John Spits—“you’ve said enough already—*allow me to say.* Besides, Mr. Chairman, if you begin to tyrannize, we’ll treat you as all tyrants should be treated—we’ll depose you, Mr. Spits.—And now, take your glasses, my lads, and I’ll sing you a favourite camp-song: but remember! you must empty a glass at the end of every verse. You can follow Splint in the chorus.”

I did not much like the condition; but, as the rest agreed to it, I was obliged to be silent. The lieutenant

then, clearing his throat, sang, in a fine, manly voice, the following

DRINKING SONG.

Come, push about, boys!

For there's nothing like wine;—

All the roses of life

Round the cup thick entwine;

Wealth, station, and honour,

The fame that floats o'er 'em—

All smile in the liquor

We quaff from our jorum.

So push round the bottle, boys! on with the revel!

And drive parson Care to his father the devil.

For where is the miser

Feels richer than we?

Or he that has honours

That prouder can be?

Those honours—and where

Is the fancy that gilds them,

So bright as our liquor?

'Tis our liquor that builds them!

So push round, etc.

etc.

They tell of the joys

That Venus can give;

We care not for Venus,

So Bacchus may live:

Let her shrine yield to his;

For his has most merit:—

'Tis right that the flesh

Should give place to the spirit.

Then, push round, etc.

etc.

For the prate of a parson

We care not a curse;

And the prate of a doctor's

A dev'lish deal worse:

We know but one cure

For the worst of all ills—

'Tis the Extract of Grapes,

Not the Tincture of Squills.

Come, push round, etc.

etc.

Who's here that wont drink
While his wine is before him;
Who's here that wont drink
To the dregs of the jorum;

Who's here that wont drink
Till his legs need a porter;—
May he diet on oatmeal
Stirr'd up in hot water.

So push round the bottle, lads! quicker, and quicker!
We'll drown parson Care in an ocean of liquor.

“By my troth, a good song!” cried the actor.

“It's just that thing, as sure as my bull's a bull!” said Mr. John Spits—“but, allow me to say, gentlemen—gentlemen, allow me to say—I think there's too much drinking in it for an honest man,—five glasses, one after another! it's too much!”—and, so saying, he poured himself out a sixth, and sent it to correct the others.

“By my manhood!” exclaimed the actor, “thou dost it bravely, jolly host! Why, man, thou'rt the very prince of good fellows! No wonder thy nose is so fruitful, when thou dost moisten the soil so liberally. Here, pour another down thy wine-cask, thou ruby-visaged soaker!”

“I am no rooty-wisage! I scorn the incineration!” spluttered my host—“Soaker yourself, you may-pole!”

“How, scab? Down with the glass, this instant!”

“I wont!” said the chairman.

“Then, damme but I'll pour it down! though I don't altogether like putting my fingers so near the blaze of thy nose.”—And the actor seized Spits by the hair, with intent to put his threat into execution: but Spits saved him the trouble.

“Well, if I must I must,” he said, in a most disconsolate voice. “Give me the glass—I will submit myself with Christian fortitude.—Ah!” added the rogue, as he set down the empty vessel with a gentle sigh—“how long shall the wicked suffer from the hands of the ungodly!” This sly hit at Mr. Snubbs set the table in a roar.

"Bravo, brother Spits!" cried the lieutenant, "I see you have the faith of *assurance*."

"Any one can see that," said Splint; "he carries the divine kindling in his nose."

"Truly," snuffed the actor, "brother Spits has great freedom, a gift and power—in drinking. Yea! he is sweetly drawn out in the glorious work."

"Verily," added brother Spits, "this is a precious, and a sweet season—a time of great refreshing—yea! I have my sweet moments." Then, suddenly resuming his manner as chairman:—"But, silence, gentlemen!—look at that Mr. Levis there! he does nothing but laugh. By the Lord, he hasn't drank a single glass since the song!"

"That's true!" exclaimed the lieutenant—"A forfeit! a forfeit!"

"Make him sing or drink!" roared the actor. "Pour it down, boys!"

"Hold his nose!" added Splint.

"Gentlemen," said I, rising, "I am willing to drink with you fairly; but your glasses follow each other a little too rapidly. I have already made myself sick in doing justice to Mr. Rattle's song; and, if you wish me to continue at your table, you must permit me to drink as suits my own pleasure."

"Ha!" cried the actor—brandishing a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other—"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more of liquor? Yes, by St. Anne! and we'll pour it down thy mouth, too."

If the Reader will recall to mind the nature of my early education, and consider that I owned, besides, a certain share of obstinacy by inheritance, he will see at once that my spirit rose on the least opposition.

"Stop, sir!" said I,—"When I consented to make one of this company, I had no idea that my actions were to be under any compulsion. Now, sir, I stay or not, just

as you please ; but no man at this table shall force me to taste a drop more than suits my own pleasure."

"Spoken like a lad of spirit!" cried the lieutenant, rising. "Gentlemen—you hear what my young acquaintance has said. Now, for myself, I will leave the room this instant, unless all restraint be removed from our merriment."

"Psha!" said the actor, "what a much-ado-about-nothing have we here! There's my hand, Mr. Levis. Why, man, you're too touchy—you take fire like tow!—but come, tow is soon burnt out. Here's to our reconciliation." And drinking off his glass, he added, in the tragic vein,

"O, *Levis*, you are yoked with a lamb,
That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
Who, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again."

This burlesque awakened my laughter, and restored the good humour of the party.

"Well, that's clever!" said the sergeant, filling himself a bumper,—"*and straight is cold again*. That's so like me—I love to quench my passions" (drinking)—
"Ah!—Now for a song!"

"I'll give you one," said the actor;—

"The master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I,
The gunner and his mate,
Lov'd Moll, Meg, and Marian, and Margery,
But none of us car'd for Kate;
For —————"

Before he could finish, the landlord, whose courage began to feel the stimulus of his liquor, broke in upon him. "Hullo, there, Mr. Drammer! You may sing your nasty songs about swabbers and Margeries as much as you please; but you'd best let alone Kate; for, though I say it, that shouldn't say it, Kate's as tidy a housekeeper as ever—ever—drunk,"—raising his glass to his lips, his meaning should be mistaken.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the actor, giving Spits a slap on the back that sent the liquor all over his rubicund visage,—"Why, how now, my host of the Bull? what ails thee, bully host?" Then, assuming the voice of a mother when soothing a child—"Poor fellow! Take thy handkerchief, chuck, and wipe thy face; but do it tenderly, lest you bruise the tender blossoms. There!" He then affected to be provoked at Spits' clumsiness, and crying out "Psha! give me the towel!", as if in a pet, snatched the handkerchief from the hands of the unfortunate landlord, and began to rub it over his face with no little violence. Poor Spits, whose pimples under this rough treatment must have given him exquisite pain, struggled like a bull entangled in the cloak of the matador; but he could not bellow, for the actor had covered his mouth with the folds of the handkerchief. What was the first movement of my host's rage, when his tormentor released him, I could not see; for the lieutenant leaned across me to whisper the sergeant. "Splint," said he, "now's the time for your song;—our host is blue already, and wants but little to sew him up. We'll teach him how to put himself on a footing with his guests!"....."Aye, aye!" answered the sergeant—with a most knowing look from his squint eyes—"I'm ready!" The lieutenant then turned to Spits and the actor, between whom words were now running high.

"Silence, gentlemen!" he said, knocking upon the table to enforce attention,—“my friend, Mr. Sergeant Splint is about to favour us with a song of a very peculiar character. It must be sung by three voices. Mr. Splint and myself will, of course, act as two of them, and our host, as chairman, is entitled to make the third. Therefore, Mr. Drammer,”—winking to the actor—“you, with Mr. Levis, must be contented to listen.”

Our host was mightily tickled by the preference shown him. “I’ll do my best,” said he, hemming conceitedly,—and that’s as much as any man can do, Mr. Rattle.”

“Certainly, Mr. Spits.—All you have to do, in this song, is to follow us closely. Do just as you see us do. There are but three verses, and you must make actions in each corresponding to the words.”

“‘Suit the action to the word,’” interposed the actor.

“Exactly so—thank you, Mr. Drammer.—Well, Mr. Spits—you’ll observe :—when we sing thus—*Knock down, knock down, knock down!*—we strike our glasses upon the table three times, thus—“Knock down, knock down, knock down!” They will be full to the brim—and yet, not a drop must be spilt.”

“O,” said Spits, pouting his lips in great contempt, “I can do that easily!”

“So, I thought,” said the lieutenant. “But, remember, Mr. Spits—you forfeit three glasses of wine for every time you spill!—At the end of each line of every verse, you touch the glass to your lips; and, at the end of each verse, you drink your wine at a breath—and then fill again for the next verse.”

“O Lord! I can do that,” said Spits, “any time!”

“No one doubts it, Mr. Spits.—Well, in the second verse, when we sing thus—“Around, around, around!” you must move your glass—filled to the brim, remember!—thrice around your head, according to the time of the music—as thus :—*Around, around, around!*—and without spilling a drop!”

“Psha!” said Spits, plunging his hands into his breeches’ pockets, and swinging backwards in his chair, —“that’s easier than the first!”

“And the last verse,” continued the lieutenant, “is exactly like the first.—Remember, Spits—there are three verses, and three chances of spilling in each; you may forfeit twenty-seven glasses of wine, my boy!”

“Never fear, never fear!” said Spits. “Come, begin.”

The wine was poured out, and, each taking his glass in his hand, the trio struck out at the full pitch of their lungs :—

Knock down, knock down, knock down :—
 The first to our king—
 The next to our lass—
 The third to ourselves—
 So, down with the glass !
 So down !

“A forfeit ! a forfeit !” cried Splint, as he set his empty glass on the table,—“Nine glasses, Mr. Spits !”

“Yes—but I drank mine off at a breath,” opposed Spits.

“So you did—after you had spilt half of it,” said the lieutenant. “Nine glasses, Mr. Spits. Come—fill again.

Around, around, around :—
 To the wine we taste—
 To the love we feel—
 Then to the truest,
 To our own true steel !
 Around !

The result of our host’s attempts in this verse was worse than in the first :—he had spilled two-thirds of his wine before he came to the end of the verse, and then he slung the glass round his head with so much eagerness that the remainder of the contents was dashed in the face of the actor.

“Tit for tat !” cried Spits, forgetting his ill-success in his joy at having wet the actor in turn.

“Yes ; but eighteen glasses already !” replied the actor—“Think of that, Master Brook !”—*Around !*”

“And now, to make up the twenty-seven, Mr. Spits !” cried the lieutenant. “Come—fill your glass.”

Knock down, knock down, knock down :—
 The first to our king—
 The next to our lass—
 The third to ourselves—
 So, down with the glass !
 So down !

“So down !” roared the sergeant, breaking his glass on the head of the landlord. The unfortunate Spits fell—

more from fright and drunkenness, however, than the force of the blow—, and the mischievous Splint, setting his foot to the table, threw it, with all its contents, on top of him.

“So-o dow-n!” spluttered the lieutenant: “O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!” spouted the actor: while poor Spits, who, under the table, lay like a tortoise on his back—with this difference only, that the latter generally lies immoveable, whereas our tortoise kept tossing his shell to and fro in his vain struggles to rise—, Spits, I say, bawled, as well as he could, “Help! murder!—Katey!—rape! help!”

Alarmed by his cries, Katey came running from the kitchen, followed by all the servants—the baronet appeared at the opposite side of the room, wrapped in a cloak—while on the staircase stood the Revd. Mr. Snubbs in his shirt, with a candlestick in one hand and a chamber-organ in the other. Mrs. Spits, with my assistance, relieved her spouse of his incumbrances and set him upon his feet.

“‘How now, my bawcock?’” asked the actor, clapping him on the back,—“‘how dost thou, chuck?’”

“Keep off!” cried Spits in a rage,—“Keep off!—’best, or I’ll kill you!”—and he endeavoured to seize a bottle, with intent, no doubt, to put his threat into execution! but I held down his hands.

“What is the reason, sir,” said the baronet with severity, “that you keep not greater quiet in your house? I have not been able to close my eyes, since I lay down, owing to your rioting.”

Spits was too drunk to be abashed. “V-v-vy you sh-shee—your honour—th-th-these—fellers—upsot my ta-tale-table upon me—and a——” The baronet turned his back upon him in disgust, and, without speaking another word, returned to his room.

“Come, come, landlord!” said I coaxingly,—“you had better retire to bed—your wife will help you.”

"Ve-el I vi-i-il, Mr. Levs-sus." But the beast could scarcely put one foot before the other. "Help-me-Ka-tey!" he hiccupped. So Mrs. Spits took his arm. But he immediately pushed her from him. "No! Sha'n't-do-Katey!" he uttered in another hiccup; and, staggering towards his room, he caught at the balusters of the staircase to save himself from falling. Just then, the preacher (who was watching the whole scene, with eyes dilated to their utmost,) turned aside the article he held—whether by design or accident I cannot say—and the the whole of its contents was precipitated upon him.

"O God!" screamed the wretched Spits, and fell flat upon his face.

"The Lord deliver us!" cried the preacher, dropping both nightingale and candlestick as he flew up the staircase.

"'Angels and *ministers*'" exclaimed the actor, as he darted after the preacher—his long legs expediting the descent of the falling articles.

"D——n!" roared the lieutenant, staggering after the actor, and crushing beneath his feet the unlucky nightingale, which had encountered his shins in its progress.

"Pots and candlesticks!" swore the more philosophic sergeant, as he brought up the rear of the flying company.

All this time—which, by the by, was not more than half-a-minute—poor Spits lay in pickle. "Ka-tey!" he cried, in a half-smothered voice,—"*I'm dr-drowned!*" "*Lay still a minute, Johnny,*" said Katey, "*and I'll help you up; only don't open your mouth, and it wont hurt you.*" Then calling the barmaid and the stableboy, who were ready to burst with suppressed laughter, the dutiful wife made them take each a leg of their fallen master, while she supported his dripping head; and thus, with his face still downwards, Mr. Spits was carried to his own room, kicking his porters, and bawling, as well as his thick tongue would permit him, "*Sto-op, Sal-ly!—you b-bitch!—let go—I t-ell you!—Bob!—You're—all—all b-bitches to-to-gether!—O, I'm choked! I'm—O—O—Damn!*"

The reader may ask how Jeremy Levis was employed during the latter part of this scene. The answer is contained in a single line of the far-famed *Hey-Diddle-Did-dle* :—

“The little dog laughed to see the sport.”

Or, if this explanation be not sufficiently ample, take the answer thus :—He was seated at the table, opposite the staircase, laughing so heartily that the tears streamed down his cheeks faster than they had ever done since the days of cowskinned boyhood.

Having remained at my post till the very dropping of the curtain—even till Mrs. Catharine Spits had cleared up the wrecks of the revel—I took my light and proceeded to my bedchamber. Just as I had opened the door, I heard the creaking of another door behind me, when, turning round, whom should I see but the actor, partly undressed, standing in the half-open entrance of his own apartment, gazing at me most curiously. I laughed outright. Immediately my knight of the green-room came up on tiptoe, and slapping me gently on the shoulder, said, in an under tone,

“Have you a mind for a little sport, my boy ?—heh ?”

“Sport ? I should say we have had enough of it for one night, Mr. Drammer ; and I confess to you I’ve a better mind for a little sleep.”

“Psha !” said the actor,—“sleep ? .

—————sleep, gentle sleep,
Nature’s soft nurse—— ?

damn sleep ! let’s tickle up that rascal preacher. My brain has been labouring with a trick ever since I went to bed. I could not catch a wink of sleep for the agony of my throes ; so I slipped on my breeches, and determined to rouse up one of those sons of Mars : but you’ll answer just as well, man—and, by my troth, a d——d sight bet-

ter—for you're soberer. Come! give me your light, and let's be at it; for, unless I'm delivered speedily, by cock and pie! I shall not rest to night."

Though my conscience had so lately reproved me for joining in the persecution of Malachi, my love of mischief was too ardent to suffer me to close my eyes upon so tempting a prospect of indulging its desires. I therefore joyfully closed with the actor's proposal, and begged him to inform me of his plans.

"Not so fast, my little man!" said he—"Is all the house at rest?"

"Mrs. Spits and the servants have just retired."

"Marry, hang them! It wōt do till they are all in bed. We will wait in your room a few minutes." So saying, he closed the door of his own apartment with great caution, and followed me into mine. There I renewed my entreaties to be made acquainted with his plans; but all he would disclose to me was—that he intended to entice the preacher from his bed, and that it was necessary for me to stand by with the light—"for," said he, "if the preacher sees you, he 'ill be forced to act up to his character, which he might not think important, were there no witness of his actions."

After waiting about ten minutes the actor rose, and taking the light, bade me follow him. We stole along the passage till we came opposite a door marked "No. 3." "Now," whispered the actor, "hold the light, and stand by me; but say nothing." He tapped gently at the door. Presently we heard the voice of the preacher within ask, in a peevish tone, "Who's there?" The actor, kneeling, applied his mouth to the keyhole.

"O, reverend sir!" said he, assuming the voice and language of a penitent, "I cannot rest except you have pity on me. I am so tortured, by the recollection of my many sins, that I fear I shall not survive till the morrow, unless you complete the blessed work which the Lord has seen fit to commence."

"Sinner!" said the preacher, "fool me not!—Begone, lewd man!"

"Alas, reverend sir, you do me wrong! I am come here for the comfortable balm of your prayers; and, if you will not have mercy on a bleeding sinner, I will prostrate myself at the threshold of your door, that, in your hearing at least, my groans may ascend to heaven."

"Wait then," said the preacher, "and I will come to you, brother."

In a few minutes, the door opened, and showed us the Revd. Mr. Snubbs, with a sheet wrapped round his body, and, on his head, a white night-cap having a long tassel dangling from the top.

The moment he saw the actor, he started back in anger, and was about to shut the door; but he cast a glance at me, and paused.

"What do you want?" he said to his pretended convert. "Have you come to mock me with your filthy scraps of plays, you castaway and child of the devil?"

"No, no!" answered the actor, who was still on his knees,—“I was once that reprobate: but, stung by the reproaches of conscience, because I had laughed at thy holy words, I struggled in the spirit, and the Lord was pleased to throw light upon my darkness; and now I see the error of my ways, and would fain turn from them.”

"But what does this young man do here?" inquired the preacher, still suspicious.

"Ah, reverend sir! it is to him that I owe the first insight into my folly. He it was who came to me but a little while ago, and reproved me for my scoffings at thy blessed counsels; and I looked into my heart, and saw that there all was so——O, have pity on me, dear sir! Save me, save me, from the snares of the enemy! Even now I see the pit yawn, and I fear to sink!"—and the hypocrite shed tears.

The preacher was now either convinced of the actor's sincerity, or fearful that I would expose him if he rejected

his supplications. "What would you have me do?" he asked.

"Accompany me, dear sir, to the privacy of my chamber, where, with you, and this good young man, I may converse on the means of my redemption."

"Wait then a minute, and I will dress myself."

"No, no, reverend sir! come as you are;—the night is not cold, and we are alone."

The preacher was persuaded. Drammer then rose from his knees, and, taking the light from my hand, led the way; the preacher went behind him; and I brought up the rear. But, instead of going to his own apartment, my roguish acquaintance descended the stairs and marched directly to the chamber of the landlord; when, softly opening the door, he motioned with his hand that the preacher should enter before him—as if from a deference to his sacred character. The unwary Malachi entered, and the door was instantly closed upon him. The actor then, holding the handle that his prisoner might not escape, began to scream, in a female voice, "Help! murder! rape!—help, help! thieves!" and thump upon the door with his fist.

"Let me out, sinner! let me out!" cried Malachi, endeavouring to pull the door open.

"Help! thieves! thieves!" screamed the voice of Mrs. Spits.

"Let me out!" repeated Malachi. Then, somebody was heard to leap upon the floor; and it sounded as though a scuffle had commenced between the preacher and Mrs. Spits; while screams from both those parties rose louder and louder.

The actor redoubled his cries. Presently, the lieutenant and the sergeant came staggering down the staircase, with drawn swords in their hands. "Hush!" I whispered—"a trick," and, instantly comprehending, they placed themselves beside me in the passage to await the issue. Then the baronet came towards us, and, almost

at the same moment, the barmaid and two of the baronet's servants. The actor now, facing the door, began to fumble at the lock as though he wished to get in.

"What's the matter there?" asked the baronet—"Why don't you burst the door open?"

This was all the roguish son of Thespis waited for: he set his foot to the door, and kicked it open, and we all rushed into the room. There a scene presented itself of the most ludicrous description. On the floor were seen the preacher and the landlady, struggling each to get loose from the other—he with nothing on him but a shirt, and she with nothing on her but a shift—and neither covering longer than needful. The lady's cap, instead of being on her head, hung from her neck by the strings, and her hair was all in disorder: the gentleman's cap had entirely disappeared, and his face was covered with blood. Over and over they rolled—thumping, and kicking, and biting, and scratching, and screaming, with all their strength.

The actor parted them—though with difficulty—and when they had regained their feet, asked, with an innocent face, what had happened.

"You—you—!" cried the preacher, shaking his fist at his tormentor, but unable to explain himself.

Silence, man!" said the actor.—"What is the matter, my good woman?"

"O, O!" blubbered Mrs. Spits,—"that villain!—that—that—hippycite!—he wanted to—to—to—to ravage me!"

The preacher, putting up his hands in horror, attempted to justify himself; but the spectators drowned his cries.

"The nasty fellar!" cried the barmaid—"Who would 'ave thought it!"

"The puppy!" growled the lieutenant—"I thought as much."

"This is his divine kindling," snuffled the sergeant.

"Shame on him! put him out!" roared one of the men-servants.

"Duck him in the horsepond!" thundered the other.

While the husband of the injured dame, too drunk to stir from his bed, hiccupped

"Dam-n!"

Sir James attempted to restore order; but his voice, powerful though it was, sunk amid the blubberings of Mrs. Spits, the groans and half-uttered cries of the preacher, and the loud invectives of the others, and he at last retired to his own apartment.—No sooner was the baronet gone than the poor preacher was tossed from one tormentor to another, each loading him with some abusive epithet, till he was fairly forced out of the room. It is probable that he would have been pursued to his own bedchamber; but a form now appeared on the staircase that made the little mob pause at once. This was no other than the preacher's wife in her night-clothes, who, pale and trembling, leaned over the balusters, probably fearing that her husband was concerned in the uproar. The moment she was seen, a feeling of delicacy caused us all to shrink back into the room whence our game had been started. The lieutenant then shut the door, saying—it was but decent to give the fellow time to retire, on his wife's account, who was not to be punished for her husband's misde-meanour,

For the few minutes we remained there, much scandalous conjecture, as to the conduct of the Revd. Mr. Snubbs, passed among us,—in which, as usual, they who best know the true nature of the case took the most active part; while the landlady, in her nymph attire, stood at the bedside, inveighing, with unwonted energy both of tongue and fist, against all "hippycrites" whatsoever, nor would be persuaded to hide her charms beneath the coverlet.

"Good night, most beautiful and injured lady," said the actor, as we retired,—“and may you forget, in the

soft embraces of your *liquorish* spouse, the rudeness offered to your chastity."

"Good night," whimpered Mrs. Spits,—“I'll have the law upon him for his nastity, so I will!”

“That's—y ou—Ka—tey!” hiccupped the uxorious Johnny, —and the door was closed.

CHAPTER XXV.

O mistress mine, where are you roaming ?

O stay and hear ; your true love's coming

That can sing both high and low :

Trip no farther, pretty sweeting ;

Journeys end in lovers' meeting

Every wise man's son doth know.

Song in Twelfth Night.

“WELL, Mr. Landlord—how many guests do you number this morning?”

“Only the baronet, besides yourself, sir—allow me to say—Mr. Levis.”

“How long is it since Mr. Rattle and the sergeant left?”

“O, they've been gone this hour, sir.”

“And your forfeits with them—heh, Mr. Spits?”

“O Lord, O Lord, sir! I see you havn't forgot last night's fun yet. Forfeits! No, no, Mr. Levis! I have my twenty-seven glasses as snug as a bug, sir; for I tell you what, that Mr. Rattle's one of the nicest men I ever knew—allow me to say—present company you know, sir, is always accepted. Says he to me, “Spits,” says he—No, he didn't say that neither—he said Mr. Spits—“Spits,” says he, “I might 'duct those ere twenty-seven glasses out of the bill; but, I tell you what, Spits, you're

a clever fellar, and it was all a sham—all a trick, Mr. Spits, to punish you”—no, he didn't say that—he said, “to warn you not to be so free with others, as you was with us; for,” says he, “I didn't mind it at all, Spits—for you're very much of the gentleman”——”

“You are sure he said that, Mr. Spits?”

“To be sure I am, Mr. Levis! He said, said he, “You've paid the penny”——”

“Penalty, I suppose, you mean.”

“Yes—penny or pennity, all's one—allow me to say, Mr. Levis. “Spits,” says he, “you've paid a penny enough for your impudence”—psha! what am I talking about!—but, no matter, Mr. Levis—you know what I mean—he said I'd paid enough, and so he paid his bill like a man, that he did. But, as for that Splint—Lord, if I catch the cock-eyed——!”

“Well—and when did the actor leave?”

“O, Tom Drammer! just after the sodjers. Lord! what a trick that was he played! I thought I'd 'ave died a laughing to see Katey so mad when he told her about it. And what do you think he said to me, Mr. Levis? Says he—“Spits,” says he, “do you see that ere bull's head of yours?”—pointing to that head there over my door, Mr. Levis—“To be sure I do,” said I, “Mr. Drammer!”.....“Well,” says he, “you can take the horns down, now.”.....“What for?” says I. “To stick them on your own head,” says he. Lord! he thought John Spits didn't know what he meant! But I'm thinking I know a buck has horns—and a buck too's a fine gentleman, my spelling book says. So, as I was a dashing fellar, he meant it for me—Lord, Lord! I understood him. “You flatter me, sir,” says I, bowing. “Not at all,” says he,—“I flatter your wife.” Only think of that, Mr. Levis!—But he's a funny fellar—an odd chicken—that Tom Drammer! I know him of old.”

“And Mr. Snubbs and the lady?”

“Just this minute gone, sir.—Lord, Lord, how sheepish the parson looked, to be sure! And then Sally—my Sally, you know, Mr. Levis—then she came out—for she’d found it was all a trick of that Tom Drammer’s—allow me to say—then she came out, whimpering, and crying, and asks his pardon on her knees, and all that sort of thing—for she’s a very pious girl, is Sally.”

“No doubt of it, Mr. Spits.—And now, get me some breakfast.”

“When does your honour mean to go?”

“That depends upon circumstances. When does the stage pass for London?”

“Not till the afternoon, sir.”

“Then I shall not wait for it. It is but eight miles’ walking, and the day is fine; and thanks to——hum! I have no baggage to trouble me.”

“Ah, I told you, Mr. Levis, that the day would be fine: for what says my almanac?——”

“Curse your almanac! Get me some breakfast.”

“But, Lord, Lord!—allow me to say—you’ll surely wait for the stage?”

“My breakfast, sir!—and then my bill, immediately.”

The breakfast was soon finished, and then came the bill. “There, sir,” said my landlord—bowing, with his right hand spread upon his breast, while with his left hand he presented the account—“you shall see how an honest man—how honest John Spits, sign of the Bull, makes out his bills.”

“Let me see.—Heh! what’s all this? ‘Night’s lodging for self and lady, 8s.—Supper and wine for do., 11. 3s.—Lodging for coachman, 2s.—Supper for do., 3s. 6d.—Wine for do., 7s. 6d.’!—Why! what is the meaning of all this?”

“Your orders, sir.”

“My orders, rascal?”

“Yes, sir—you said you’d answer for the whole expense.”

“Hum!—‘Stabling, etc., for horses, 11s.—Breakfast for coachman and lady, 10s.’ Furies!—‘Breakfast for self, 3s.’—and for my coachman, five!—hum!—‘Dinner, 5s. 6d.—Supper, 7s. 6d.—Wines, 12. 5s.’!—*Honest John Spits!*”

“For the whole company, you know, sir.”

“Yes—but Mr. Rattle bore half the expense.”

“So he did, sir—and that’s t’other half.”

“‘Bed, 5s.—Breakfast, 3s.—6l. 6s.’!—Why, you impudent rascal! do you think me fool enough to suffer so monstrous an imposition?”

“Imposition!—O Lord, O Lord, sir!—Imposition!—ask your pardon, Mr. Levis, but John Spits, Sign of the Bull, isn’t the man to impose upon such a generous gentleman as Mr. Levis—not he, sir—allow me to say.”

This flattering declaration was of course unanswerable; so I paid the bill, and departed. As I strode from the door, I had the satisfaction of hearing a hearty laugh at my expense. I had half a mind to return and punish the scoundrel, as he deserved; but then, my Reader, it occurred to me that there were certain things, called consequences, which were always sure to be at the tail of every action.—Now, if I were to beat John Spits—thought I,—John Spits might beat me in return—, a restitution by no means desirable. So I swallowed the affront, and went on my way.

—Is it not singular—, I asked of myself, as I stripped off, one by one, the leaves of a willow switch which I had cut on the road,—Is it not singular, that, with all my endeavours, I can never command the respect of my inferiors? Sir James Maitland, with a look, represses the insolence of that rascal, Spits,—he needs but speak, and even the zealous Mr. Snubbs forgets to exhort; while I, though I may copy the very same looks and the very same words, am laughed at! Where lies the fault?—My person is far from commanding. True—but then it is that of a gentleman; and my face is certainly of no

vulgar stamp.—Can it lie in my youth?—— Ah, I have it!—, and I began very industriously to peel the bark from my switch,—It is because I assume airs that suit neither my age nor my appearance. What if a clown were to clothe himself in the dress of a gentleman:— Would it not be evident, to the most casual observer, that the fellow was affecting a state to which he had not been accustomed? Would he not be hooted, even by those of his acquaintance who had hitherto shown him observance? ——Thus, forsooth, I have made myself ridiculous, when I might have been respected! and a rogue, who has scarcely brains enough to bear him out in his villainy, takes advantage of my vanity to make me submit to an imposition too gross almost to deceive a child! O, what an ass! —, and the hot blood rushed to my cheeks.—Ass?—, I repeated, gnawing the end of my willow with an execution so skilful, that, could the whole race of mice have been collected into one family before me, all the traps in the world might have been sold for old iron; for the little creatures had died of pure envy.— Why, I'm the very ass of the fable! I must needs think the lion's skin graceful, because it was comfortable—forgetting that my ears were uncovered, and that my first attempt to roar must turn out a bray!——“ Well, well! it is a good lesson,” I exclaimed aloud; and, instantly, the whole affair struck me in so ludicrous a light, that I was forced to laugh at my folly. “ O, you're getting wisdom fast, master Jeremy!” I cried, as I tapped my foot lightly with the willow switch. An innocent fly had just alighted on the very spot where the stroke fell:—it struck him dead. I stooped, and picked him up. — Poor fly!—, I exclaimed internally, as I laid the insect on the palm of my hand and gently blew the dust from his delicate wings, — Poor fly!——and have I killed thee?—— A little while ago, and thou didst bask thee in the warm sunshine, and take thy fill of pleasure; nor did a fear, that the next minute might bring with it the rain and cold, cause thee

to rub thy little legs together with a whit the less of pride, or to lose one note of thy harmless buzzing : but now ——— poor fly ! ——— And a trifling movement, which was of playfulness to me, proved death to thee ! How know I, lifeless insect, but that thy fate is an emblem of mine own ? Warming myself a little while in the sunny gleam of prosperity, buzzing thoughtless through the happy hours, I may alight upon some great man's boot at last—whence a mere caprice shall sweep me to the dust : but then ! no gentle hand shall raise me—no kind heart feel for my helplessness—no breath of pity restore my soiled honours——as I have done for thee, poor fly ! — One moment I hung my head in sadness : the next I threw the insect from me. — Psha ! am I growing sentimental ? Let the worst come to the worst—so I preserve my gaiety, what care I ?

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,
And merrily hent the stile-a :
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

Thank thee for that verse, my darling Shakspeare ! I would not exchange it for all the maxims of all the philosophers.

A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a——

'Goes all the day'—but *whither* am I going ?—Hum ! to London.—For what ?—To live.—And how ?—O,—
'Aye, there's the rub !'—and changing my half-dancing gait for a staidier walk, I threw my switch over a hedge, thrust one hand into my bosom, and the other into a pocket of my breeches, drooped my head upon my chest, pouted my under lip, and became very sober. — My uncle Jeremy is a kind old soul, with all his oddities :—I wonder whether he does not think sometimes of his naughty Jerry, of whom he was once so fond.—How he must miss me, poor old man, as he sits out the long evenings, and

pires for some one to listen to his oft-told stories, and laugh at his familiar jokes! Perhaps he is at this moment thinking of his truant nephew—perhaps a tear may, even now, be staining his weather-beaten cheeks, as the remembrance of my ingratitude swells his big heart. I know he loves me still. What if I return?—All would be pardoned and forgotten, and I should be again—— But how would that look? What would all my acquaintance say?—*O, he is glad enough to come back now!*—And then my proud uncle Timothy, with his scornful looks!— “No! never!—I will not return,” I exclaimed,—and, as my false pride thus got the better of every honest feeling, I raised my head, threw out my chest, and strode as though the earth were scarcely good enough for me to tread upon. — Yes,— I said, resuming my reflections,— I will act as becomes me:—In four months I shall be twenty-one—I am no longer a child.— I can easily obtain employment as clerk in some mercantile house. I shall rise slowly, to be sure,—but what of that? Shall I not owe my fortune to my own industry?—Elevated, as I was, by these milkmaid calculations, the clouds of my temper broke, the sun shone forth, and I tripped along my way, singing “Jog on,” to an impromptu tune of my own composing.

As the road in which I travelled was, perhaps, of all the London roads the least frequented, I had walked what I judged to be a space of nearly three miles, without meeting a single creature in human shape, when before me, at a little distance, I perceived a female leaning upon one of the posts of a fence. Her back was towards me. I could therefore only see that her person was finely proportioned, and her dress in the extreme of plainness. — Ah!—, thought I,— here is some pretty country wench, or I am much deceived. I’ll have a kiss, by all that’s sweet!— I rushed forward to put my impudent design into execution. The female turned:—it was the wife of the preacher.

I started back in the utmost surprise, and, bowing respectfully, was about to proceed on my way,—for it struck me that the lady, for some reason, might be waiting her husband in that place ; but, as I passed her, I could not deny myself the indulgence of a farewell glance. I looked :—she had been weeping. — My God ! a beautiful woman in distress !— “ Madam,——” I began, and stopped short. “ Madam,——” and again I stopped. “ Pardon me ; I would willingly be of some service to you——if I knew how.” I awaited her answer. She turned aside, and burst into tears. Adieu to ceremony now !—“ Madam,” I said, in my most respectful manner, “ I am indeed a stranger to you ; yet I will venture to offer what little aid may be in my power. You might lighten your distress, if you would but place confidence in me.——I feel, dear madam, I would risk my life to assist you.”

Reader ! you are arrived, perhaps, at an age when men look with no gentle eye upon the enthusiasm of youth. Before you condemn me, that, without being aware of the extent to which I was pledging mine honour, I so frankly enlisted myself in the cause of an unknown female, whose circumstances were certainly equivocal, shut the volume (retaining, however, your thumb at this passage), and closing your eyelids to the realities of the present, summon up before your mental vision the phantoms of buried boyhood :—*they* shall plead for me.—You are, perhaps, still young. If so, and, what I would fain believe you, a youth of promise, my excuses I seek within your sympathy. Your sympathy, I say ; for, if you be that thing papas and grandpapas are wont to term *a prudent young man*, I tell you plainly—I despise you. Indeed, I do not jest ! my hair is gray—listen to the words of experience :—

Whenever I find a *young man* cautious in his language, cool, and wily—I shun him ; for it will not be his own fault, if he prove not a scoundrel. Youth should be hasty—rash—enthusiastic. Say that circumspection evinces

a knowledge of the world :——granted—but, *in youth*, a knowledge of the world's faithlessness should never chill the readiness of our trust in the world's promises.

After some little hesitation, "I must believe you, sir," said the lady,—“I will avail myself of your generosity.” She paused a moment. “But do not ask me why I am here, and in this condition,——I cannot tell you now.” She then informed me that her only wish was to reach the metropolis as soon as possible.

I readily promised my assistance ; for I resolved, within myself, that John Spits should procure me some sort of vehicle, from some quarter or other, though it should cost me all that remained of my little stock of money.

“I have thought of a plan, madam,” said I,—“We will return to the tavern together, and there——”

“No, no ! not for worlds !—I—I dare not.” The reason of her objection was evident.

“Then, ma'm, suppose you remain at some farm house on the road, while I proceed alone to the tavern, and endeavour to procure the conveyance you desire ?”

The lady raised her eyes to mine with an expression that would have more than rewarded me, had my conduct been ever so voluntary. “I cannot thank you now,” she said,—“but I hope, before many hours, to convince you, sir, that you have not thrown away your generous courtesy upon a *very* unworthy object,”—and she depressed her beautiful eyelids, and, as I watched her, I saw two crystal drops steal from between the long dark lashes, linger there a little space, then slowly trickle down the pale cheeks, where yet lay the last faint streaks of a momentary suffusion, like the fading hues on a twilight heaven. Were they tears of pride, dear Reader ?

I picked up her cloak, which lay at the foot of the post on which she was leaning when I first perceived her, threw it over my right arm, and accommodating myself to the gentle pace of my companion, began to retrace my steps to the Sign of the Bull.

The sky, which, when I took my leave of 'honest' Spits, was shining with almost unspotted clearness, had been gradually darkening during the last hour, and now presented a most threatening aspect. Numerous clouds, of a dark, smoky hue, were gathering rapidly, to spread themselves, in one unbroken mass, over the whole visible heaven. At the same time, those various little circumstances, that ever wait upon the coming shower, began to warn us to a shelter :—the air suddenly became chilly, and had a peculiar odour ; the startled birds ceased their singing, and fled for cover to the brakes and bushes ; the cattle rose from the ground, and standing snuffed the air awhile, then turned, and lowing sought their stalls. The thunder too now muttered at a distance.

"Let us hasten, madam," I said,—“or the shower will overtake us. That little lane to the left must lead directly to the cottage yonder.” The lady quickened her pace without speaking a word. Just then a flash of lightning shot athwart the blackness of the skies, and was followed, almost instantly, by a thunderclap—of that awful kind which resembles the sharp clear rattle of a rifle. My companion uttered a faint shriek, and grasped my arm in her terror. I persuaded her to lean upon it for support ; and we hurried our steps : but, every time it lightened, she would press my arm so tremulously with her delicate fingers—those fingers which Mrs. Spits had eulogized, above every thing of the digital kind, for their whiteness and slenderness, the tapering of their extremities and the transparency of their nails——O, my Reader ! have you ever had a lovely woman leaning on you for protection, and looking up to you, as to a superior being, with eyes soft and timid as those which poets give the young gazelle ?—Imagine, then, the nature of my feelings, as I whispered encouragement to my trembling *protégée* ; for, exclusive of a mere sense of gratified pride, I dearly loved timidity in woman, and this fair methodist seemed the most timid of her sex.—I welcomed with de-

light each flash of lightning and each peal of thunder; for, then, she would raise to mine her meek and beautiful eyes,—as, in a storm at sea, the fearful passengers watch every change in the countenance of the master, to read there assurance of safety or confirmation of their worst terrors,—and cling to my support with a reliance that set at nought the newness of our acquaintance, and made us friends at once.—Yes, my Reader! in my young days, when I was ardent as you are now, and, like your's, my blood coursed madly through my veins at the merest impulse, I would have perilled life itself to render service to a woman—I would have sought out danger, on its steepest precipice, for one approving smile from the eye of beauty: and, even now that the ice of sixty winters has choked the torrent of my wilder feelings, the remembrance of the dear, appealing eyes, that have looked into mine so lovingly, makes my old heart sicken with a long-estranged delight, and I look back upon those days of chivalric sentiment, as the poor prisoner, that fixes his vacant gaze on the blank, eternal walls of his dungeon, may be supposed to recall to mind the home he must not hope to see again, with all its many scenes of boyish frolic, and assign to each grassy field, and trickling streamlet, some pleasure, all its own, and tasted by him when his heart was young, and he laughed with the gayest, and the blessed sun shone bright upon him—that sun, whose warmth and light are still bestowed upon the grassy field and trickling streamlet, but never more must gladden him. Let them laugh that will:—even the smell of the lees (—so Æsop tells us—) was pleasant to the old woman who could get nothing else from the wine-cask,—and, now, that nothing more substantial remains, I love the odour of those gallant days, when, at the risk of a consumption, or a ruined coat, I would have ventured forth into any shower to hold an umbrella over the head of a female—provided she was handsome.—Indeed, I do not wonder that the knights of old could cut

giants through the middle, and do other wonderful feats at the prayer of distressed beauty ; for, at such a moment, with a prospect of but half the reward that we are told was held out to them, I could have encountered the devil himself,—aye, and his whole family at his back in armour of proof—scilicet, serpent-skin.

We hurried our steps ; but we could not distance the rain, which now began to fall in large silvery drops, the harbingers of a heavy shower. “Walk but a little quicker, dear madam,” I said—as I wrapped my companion in her cloak, with perhaps as much anxiety as I might have felt were I her lover—, “—but a little quicker, and we shall yet escape.” She tried ; but her delicate little foot measured the ground on the same scale as before. I was actually revolving whether I should not take her in my arms, and carry her through the trifling distance that remained between us and the farm house, when a coach-and-four came thundering down the road at full speed. It was Sir James Maitland’s. My resolution was made in an instant. I ran towards the vehicle, calling to the driver to stop ; but I should probably have been disregarded, had not my voice been seconded by that of the baronet himself. I then approached the coach-door, and, the glass being let down, told the baronet in a few words what the reader knows already.

Sir James immediately threw open the door, sprang to the ground, and, approaching my companion, urged her, in the most respectful manner, to take a seat in his carriage. The lady declined the offer, and casting a reproachful glance at me, turned to continue her walk towards the lane. “But consider, madam!” I cried, venturing to oppose her,—“even if you reach the house unwet, you are not sure of being welcome. Moreover, you may wait for hours before the storm shall be over, and then, the state of the road will render it impossible for you to proceed.—See now!—this is no time to hesitate!”

—and, indeed, the shower was beginning to descend with violence.

“Come, madam,” said the baronet, extending his hand,—“let me help you in.”

“But ———”. She looked at me, and stopped.—The baronet understood her.

“Of course, he goes with you.”

The fair methodist no longer hesitated. I assisted her in—and entered myself; the baronet followed; the door was closed; the whip sounded—we were on our way to London.

There was a silence for some minutes, broken only by the heavy rumbling of the thunder and the pattering of the rain against the glasses. Sir James was the first to speak—making some commonplace remark to the lady on his happiness in having it in his power to be of service to her, etc. This compliment—which was, really, nothing but a delicate hint that he should be happy to learn any particulars relative to her having been found in my company, etc.—threw the party addressed into the utmost confusion:—she coloured violently, then became pale again, and stammered forth her thanks, coupled with some such promise of future explanation as she had already made to me.

Here the conversation would have dropped; but my foolish vanity whispered—Jeremy, what will Sir James, who rides in his coach-and-four, think of your travelling a dirty road on foot? He will suspect you to be nothing better than a poor blackguard.—*A poor blackguard!* The bare idea of such a suspicion was intolerable. I therefore made some inquiries of the baronet relative to the London stage-coaches,—letting him know the nature of the information which my host of the Bull had given me on that same point—, and I had the satisfaction of learning that ‘honest John Spits,’ with a view of retaining so easy a customer as I had proved to be, had been imposing upon my ignorance—that I had already remained at the

tavern twenty-four hours more than needful, since coaches were passing to and from London every hour in the day. This demonstration of the *gullibility* of my character was not over agreeable;—it made me bite my lip. — However,—thought I,—I may thank John Spits for my being seated where I am—, and forthwith I plunged into a meditation upon the singularity of the circumstances which had brought Mrs. Snubbs, Sir James Maitland, and Jeremy Levis together. My fit of thoughtfulness continued uninterrupted till we had entered the metropolis.

“In what direction, madam, shall I order the coachman to drive?” inquired the baronet.

“To Lady Arne’s, if you please, sir,—Upper Grosvenor-street.”

“Lady Arne’s!” exclaimed the baronet in some surprise. “Pardon the liberty, madam,—are you a relative of hers?”

“Her sister.”

“Indeed! And—and—”. The baronet’s politeness struggled—prevailed,—and he was silent.

The carriage stopped. The baronet and myself sprang out, and assisted the lady to descend.—As she was about to enter the house, she turned to us, and said, with a sweetness all her own, “I cannot ask you in now, gentlemen,—my sister knows not of my coming, and it would be ——. I shall expect, however, to see you both this evening, when I—I hope,” she faltered, “to remove the unfavourable impressions that the circumstances, under which it has been my misfortune to appear, must have made upon your minds.”

—And no doubt you will remove them, fair being!—I mentally exclaimed, as the closing door shut her from my view. I touched my hat to the baronet, and was about departing.

“If you will permit me, sir, I will leave you at your lodgings,” said Sir James, bowing for me to enter the carriage.

"I thank you, sir,"—and my cheek burned as I answered—"I will not put you to that trouble:—the rain has ceased, and I have but a short distance to walk."

The baronet eyed me with a look of suspicion, and bowed coldly. I returned the bow with equal coldness.

—What care I for his suspicions?—I said to myself, as, with haughty step, I took my way to the nearest coffee-house.—Strange that we should thus seek to deceive ourselves! Those very suspicions, which I tried to persuade myself I despised, were galling me not a little.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Quoi ! sur un beau semblant de ferveur si touchante
Cacher un cœur si double, une âme si méchante !

Le Tartufe.

In the evening I went to Lady Arne's. Having sent in my name, I was shown into a room where were seated ;—a middle-aged gentlewoman, with a small basket of needlework before her—a young lady, of interesting appearance—and the lady of my morning's adventure, still plainly dressed, but no longer singularly so.

The latter received me in the most flattering manner. She took my hand, and, turning to the elder female, "Sister," said she, "this is the young gentleman to whose kindness, as well as courtesy, I am so much indebted." Lady Arne made a suitable remark on the occasion, and then introduced me to the youngest of the party, naming her as her daughter, "Miss Arne."

Scarcely had I finished making the necessary replies to the compliments of the two sisters—that is, by modestly disclaiming all merit in what I had done, and lauding the good fortune which had enabled me to be of service, etc.

etc.—, when Sir James Maitland entered the room. The civilities of his introduction were soon over; and a few preliminary nothings, which I leave to the reader's imagination, having passed among the company, the fair Methodist commenced the explanation she had promised.

The greater part of her recital I shall take the liberty of giving in my own words, in as much as, by that method, the reader will gain something in the article of conciseness, besides being made acquainted with sundry little particulars, which the delicacy of the lady prevented her from mentioning, and which I learned, afterwards, from various sources that will display themselves to the reader in the course of my history.

She was the youngest daughter of the Rt. Hon. Francis Paynthurley, Viscount Balnerton.—Her father, being somewhat advanced in years, seldom stirred from his country residence. Hence, in the frequent visits which she made to her married sisters in town, Miss Paynthurley was in a measure placed beyond her parent's control. On one of these visits, she became intimate with a lady who had recently stimulated her decaying piety by a change of faith. This lady, in that laudable zeal for making converts which is so well exemplified in the fable of the fox without a tail, induced her young friend to attend the prayer meetings held at her house. Here, under the heavy hammering of Mr. Snubbs's exhortations, the pliant mind of Miss Paynthurley received the desired bent. Her temper had always been of a pensive cast: it now sunk into habitual melancholy. Taught to despise the earthly comforts which an unwise Providence has thought necessary for the well-being of his creatures, and to shun with horror the treacherous pleasures which the same Providence has held out to man merely to guide him into the power of his enemy, she tortured her spirit to make it loath its present mode of existence, plucked out its eyes with the vain hope that it would no longer skim along the earth, but direct its flight to a higher

atmosphere (—an atmosphere, in which it is utterly incapable of sustaining itself without occasionally descending to a denser air—); for the Deity—she was taught—when he bound man, in a certain degree, irrevocably to the earth, making it the prop on which his mighty spirit should rest her feet a little time, while with her hands alone she should grasp at heaven, sought to limit the action of a work, the power of whose springs he did not understand. Thus rendered miserable, by striving for a perfection, to aim at which is to soar like Icarus, she returned to her father's house to forsake all amusements, to *task* herself with prayers—thereby rendering irksome what, proportioned to her strength, would have been a pleasure—, and to shun all society but that of a few pious old ladies of the neighbourhood, whose understandings, being penguin-winged, ran no risk of harming them—flapped they ever so loudly.—Her father, like most men, very soberly inclined now he had nothing to gain in this world by wickedness and every thing in the next by righteousness—Her father, I say, being, like the most of old men, very soberly inclined, saw nothing objectionable in his daughter's extraordinary devotion; for his lordship did not suppose such a thing possible as that devotion's being without the pale of the established church.—At length the Revd. Mr. Snubbs paid a visit to the little flock of penguins I have mentioned, and our young convert secretly attended all his exhortations. The preacher, who had admired her spirit in the city, did not fail to nourish it in the country:—he persuaded her to take solitary walks that he might commune with her alone, and, as his talk was all of *love*, he soon, in the volubility of his zeal, mistook the adjectives and substituted *human* for *divine*. His proselyte was at first startled,—she could not imagine what so good a man had to do with the infirmities of the affections—and she remonstrated with him on his dereliction: but Malachi, who had a gift and power in argument, brought all his eloquence to

bear upon so good a cause;—he talked of the love of God as necessarily implying a love for all God's creatures,—he said his affection was not that of carnal-minded men—his was the sympathy of righteousness which sought union with righteousness—he felt she had a calling to the glorious work,—and he painted in flaming colours the good they two might do, were they to go hand in hand to redeem the world of sinners,—and lastly, he spoke of visions that had appeared to him, by which he had been enjoined to unite himself with the woman Mary Paynthurnley,—and he prevailed; for his listener saw not in the good man's countenance the image of a cocoa-nut, as we did, but the image of *divine love*, and she fancied she felt within her the tie of sympathy that bound their fates together.—They were secretly married by a brother preacher of Malachi's.*

The remainder of the story the lady shall tell herself.

“The day succeeding our marriage, my husband declared his determination of settling in America—as offering a better field for his exertions. The idea of quitting my country was horrible to me; but in vain I opposed him. He said that, while the moral condition of the new world called imperiously for the labours of gospel-ministers, the freedom of its laws secured those labours unmolested: he drew a dreadful picture of the indignation with which the Almighty would not fail to visit us, should we neglect his orders, and then he contrasted with it the blessings that would be showered upon us should we obey

*If the reader be unacquainted with the power of fanaticism, he will hesitate to believe that a man like Malachi Snubbs could have had such influence over a woman of Miss Paynthurnley's understanding, rank, and beauty; but, if he has known but half as many instances as I have of a total change effected in the characters of women (—with the other sex, for various reasons, the change is more partial—) by these pedlars of pious mischiefs, he will not only be ready to give credence to facts less undeniable than these, but to believe the most monstrous fictions it is in the power of fancy to invent—provided those fictions have for their subjects the frolics of the Proteus Fanaticism.

them. The influence he had gained over me was so powerful that I consented,—consented to leave my friends, my relations, my country, all, to wander with him in a strange land ; and yet I did not love him—I knew nothing of that feeling, which is said to swallow all others in its vortex, and even to change our very natures ; it was a blind fanaticism that prompted me—and I, the most timid of my sex, could at its bidding hush the terrors of my woman's heart, and stand ready to abide the utmost for its sake."

"That very night I left my father's house, taking with me all my jewels and the most valuable articles of my wardrobe ; for my husband said, that, though wealth was sinful, it was our duty to take with us sufficient means to prevent our becoming a burden to strangers.—I left a note in my apartment addressed to my father, containing an account of my marriage, with the names of the minister and the witnesses, and every other particular necessary for the vindication of my character, should it be attacked,—and praying his forgiveness.—To prevent immediate pursuit, I locked the door and took the key with me."

"It was not many hours after I had put my person so completely into his power, that I discovered certain points in my husband's character that led me to suspect his devotion was not altogether so sound as I had thought it : but it was now too late to repent of my conduct, and I endeavoured to shut my eyes to the faults that pained them."

"We rode the whole of the next day, and, what I still think very singular, without any evidence of our flight's having been discovered. Last night we were driven by the storm to take shelter in the same tavern with yourselves—as you already know."

"This morning we continued our flight. During our ride, my husband appeared unusually tender :—he lavished on me more attention than he had ever done since the

first period of our acquaintance, and tried all in his power to dissipate the gloom which had hung upon my spirits since I had left my home. When we were arrived opposite the place where Mr. Levis found me, he suddenly checked the horse, saying there was a buckle slipped in the harness which it was necessary to replace before we could proceed. He then alighted from the carriage, and held out his arms to assist me to descend likewise, remarking, with a tenderness of manner that surprised me as much as it gave me pleasure, "The animal may start, Mary,—and your life is too precious to me that I should risk it, even for a moment." No sooner had I touched the ground than he sprang back into the carriage, threw me my cloak, whipped his horse, and was gone in an instant."

The fair Methodist paused. Sir James seemed to think that the best commentary he could offer was silence, and Jeremy followed his example.—In a few moments the lady continued :—

"The more I reflect upon the ease with which my elopement was accomplished, the more I feel alarmed ; for, although I took the precaution to disguise my person as much as possible by the meanness of my dress, yet I am confident had a pursuit been once commenced it must have been successful. Lord Balmerton is bitter in his resentments :—I fear that this neglect but indicates the extremity of his anger.—Perhaps—" (her voice faltered)—"perhaps—he abandons me—he thinks me worthless."

Lady Arne took her hand affectionately. "Now this is unreasonable, Mary," she said, "—You have indeed offended his lordship grievously ; but I flatter myself I have influence enough to obtain your pardon—you know I am his favourite.—Come, let us ask the opinion of these gentlemen on the question we were discussing a little while ago." Then, turning to Sir James and myself,

she added :—" We were in doubt whether it would be best for my sister to resume her maiden name or not. This unfortunate marriage will, of course, be known wherever scandal is relished ; but it must soon yield to other tea-table topics, and, as the wretch that deceived her will be obliged to leave the country, I think if Miss Paynthurnley were to drop his name, the whole matter might soon be forgotten. You, gentlemen, have by accident become so intimately acquainted with every feature of this unpleasant affair, that, although strangers to us, we may consult you.—What, sir, is your opinion ? (*to Sir James.*)"

" It coincides with your ladyship's, entirely," answered the baronet. " No one can blame Miss Paynthurnley for dropping the name of such a man ; and even supposing that this step help not to put a speedy end to the scandal of the malicious, it certainly cannot prolong its existence."

" There, aunt !" cried Miss Arne,—“ you can resist no longer—we have another voice on our side.—Come, my hot-headed grandpapa is not so bad as you think him, and, when he hears you have resumed your own name in a spirit so like his own, he'll declare his child must have been bewitched, and pardon her at once,—and, indeed, were your marriage a capital crime, any jury in England would decide you were not in your senses at the time of commission—I'd undertake your defence myself ! Besides, aunt, though Paynthurnley is somewhat of a barbarous name, it is not so vulgar as Snubbs :—*Mrs. Malachi Snubbs* ! only think how abominably that would look upon a card !—and, then, how should I ever be able to speak to you ? I should certainly fall into a fit every time I were to attempt it—Aunt Snubbs !”

The young lady's levity, which was evidently assumed to dispel her aunt's melancholy, had the desired effect : —the fair Methodist, whom, as I have all Miss Arne's abhorrence for the name of Snubbs, I shall in future call by her maiden name, smiled, and, patting the soft cheek

of her neice, said affectionately, "Ah, Mary—you will never lose *your* gayety!"

"No, aunt—not till I'm *bewitched*."

Miss Paynthurnley coloured—but without displeasure—and turning to the baronet and me, intimated a desire to know who we were. "And now, gentlemen," she said, "that I have made you acquainted with my short story, am I not entitled to a return of 'courtesy'?—Of Sir James Maitland's history I am already informed, if I be not much deceived?"

"You are not deceived, madam," answered the baronet,—“Change but the name of the unfortunate George Whitford for that of James Maitland, and the names of Carlton and Osgood for those of Walton and Osborne, and you know all that is worth knowing of my life. The melancholy tale was much talked of in the fashionable world—so much so, indeed, that, as I have heard, an author, induced by the opportunity it afforded of composing a tragedy on the strict model of the French theatre, would actually have dramatized it, had not my friends purchased his silence.”*

"And—," inquired Miss Paynthurnley with some hesitation,—“and may I not ask whether Sir James Maitland had not the motive of—of discovering my real character, when he did so much violence to his feelings as voluntarily to renew the recollections of his sorrows before a company of entire strangers?”—and a faint blush suffused her cheeks, like the first pink light of the morning on a field of snow. The lady must have been but little conversant in human nature, or she would have known, that, far from doing violence to his feelings, the baronet had really gratified them in the narration of his misfortunes.

The pale cheek of Sir James caught the blush, as he responded:—"Forgive me, madam. The contrast be-

* *Purchased!*—"O mores!" that Melpomene should play the wench!

tween your appearance and that of your—companion was so striking, that, notwithstanding the evident dissimilarity between your disposition and that of the unhappy Gertrude, I could not but suspect you had, like her, been deceived by a villain.”

In spite of the baronet's compliment to her personal appearance, I could perceive that Miss Paynthurnley was a little displeased at the title so freely given to her recreant Snubbs;—so easily are we offended by a reproach cast upon those who are connected with us, how small soever may be our regard for them.

My turn now came to explain my character, and I prepared for the task with all the diffidence of an able statesman, who, in drawing up an account of his administration, is resolved to slur, or conceal entirely all such points as may not tell well for him, and to dwell with emphasis on all such as may,—or, of an experienced cook, who, ordered to prepare a reputable feast from poor materials, peppers and sauces well such meats as are over fragrant, but leaves to their own rich juices those which are fresh, perhaps garnishing them with a slice or two of lemon, or a leaf of parsley, that the eye may be attracted to the dish that is meant to please the nose and palate,—or (in a comparison still more applicable, and the third in the regular order of my anticlimax of comparisons) with all the assurance of a poor devil of an author, who, being invited to dinner by my Lord Mæcenas, brushes carefully that spot of his coat which will still endure refreshing, polishes the few yet lingering buttons, draws his pen over the faded complexions of the seams, and artfully suspends from one of the pockets the handkerchief he has borrowed of his landlady's chambermaid, to hide the rent which the accidental divorcement of the coat-tails may betray in the luminous seat of his breeches.

My anxiety to appear well was not in the least diminished by my observing the interest with which Miss Arne appeared to listen to my disclosure.

I mentioned my parentage, just as it was ; then I passed over, as of no moment, all those little incidents which had marked my career from the time of leaving school till my arrival at London—merely saying that my uncle Jeremy, being wealthy and without children, had adopted me as his heir ; then I drew the character of my uncle with that affected mercy which those lions the reviewers,* when gorged with food and in consequent good-humour, sometimes display to the poor wretches that have dared to come within reach of their royal paws,—so that I made him appear a very uncomfortable old gentleman, while all I said, was—“ Old age is so apt to testy !” and “ Sickness and pain, you know, will render irritable even the best of tempers,” etc. When I told of my elopement from my uncle’s protection, omitting, out of respect to the delicacy of the ladies, my operation on Rose, I observed a very provoking expression on the bright lip of Miss Arne. Though somewhat disconcerted, I controlled my feelings, and thus concluded my autobiography :—

“ I jumped into the first hackney-coach I met, and ordered the driver to take me in any direction—I did not care what, so it was from London. My object was to get as far as possible from the authority of my uncle ; for, in the humour which then possessed me, it galled me to the soul to think, that, at an age when I was able to support myself, I had lived dependent on his bounty, and I felt degraded as long as I remained within sight of his dwelling.—By the time that I arrived at the Bull tavern, my passion was thoroughly cooled ;—I considered my flight ridiculous ; and I resolved to return to the city the next morning. This resolution I was prevented from carrying

* My amanuensis asks whether it would not be well to write *ramscats* instead of *kions*—giving his reason, that those sleek-skinned, purring animals are so remarkably fond of playing with the little mice previously to cracking their bones ; but, as I wish to be respectful where impudence will only bring upon me the punishment of the “ young saucebox ” in the apple-tree—namely, a liberal shower of mud, I shall make no alteration in the text, leaving it to the judicious reader to choose which metaphor he pleases.

into effect by the roguery of my host. However, I have no reason to regret his imposition, since to it I owe the happiness I at present enjoy.”—Here the gallant Jeremy bowed to the ladies with a gracefulness that would have become a courtier. Miss Arne had the rudeness to smile.—“I have thus, madam, made you acquainted with all the follies of my past life. I will go further:—It is now my intention to procure employment in some respectable mercantile house; for, though I know my uncle loves me still, and would receive me with open arms, I will never return to his protection—I would rather starve than stoop to such a meanness!”

The greater part of the above was false? Yes; but I did not deliver it with less of energy on that account.—Much is said of the “eloquence” and the “irresistible eloquence of truth”:—it has been my misfortune to resemble, in one respect, the hero of the Odyssey,

—————ὅς μάλ' ἀπολλὰ

Πλαγχθῆναι, —————

Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω·

and I have found Falsehood often eloquent, while Truth would stammer. However—if the reader wishes to be convinced how easy it is to excite oneself in defence of a lie, let him waste an hour in a court of justice.

“I see my suspicions have wronged you, my young sir,” said the baronet, in the frankness of a truly generous soul, eager to make amends for the injury it had done,—and he extended his hand in token of confidence. Then, indeed, I felt heartily ashamed of my disingenuousness. “But,” he continued, “permit me to ask you if you are connected with the family of Levis of Wiltshire.”

“My uncle represents the younger branch of that family.”

“Ah?—an ancient and highly respectable stock!”—and from that moment I could perceive I rose in the baronet’s estimation.

—— Stop, Mr. Levis! you are guilty of an inconsistency. It is evidently your wish to represent the baronet as a man of sound judgment and generous feelings—and yet you make him weak enough to attach importance to the accident of birth!——

Hum!

*Nam genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.*

All well enough —— in sound: but believe me, dearest Reader, it is with ancestry as with money—I never knew any affect to despise it but those who had it not.

“I admire your spirit, my young friend,” said the baronet, breaking the silence that succeeded his last remark, —“but not for itself; for, had you my years upon you, the same would justly be considered as a false shame, which, when you had been guilty of folly, and your judgment was endeavouring to set you right, prevented your following that judgment;—I admire it, as proceeding from a feeling natural, and, therefore, becoming to youth; and which, when time has given your reason strength to hold it in proper check, will be rather useful than otherwise, carrying you with ease through many little obstacles that will present themselves to make you stumble in the way of integrity: but let me advise you to return to your uncle’s protection; you are confident he still loves you, and would receive you with open arms; you will therefore be doubly guilty—guilty towards him as well as towards yourself—if you persist in rejecting his favour. I am aware I am taking a great liberty, Mr. Levis; but the singularity of the circumstances which have made us acquainted, precludes all ceremony,—besides, the account you have given of yourself has inspired me, if you will permit me to say it, with a feeling of anxiety for your welfare—an anxiety in which I believe I am not wrong in supposing these ladies participate.”

The interest, which the baronet had so suddenly conceived for me, reminded me so strongly of the benevolence of the unfortunate Mr. A——, that I was affected almost to tears. However, quickly smothering the rising sensation, I stole a glance at the ladies, and saw that they were waiting anxiously for my reply. This observation only confirmed me in my folly, and I answered the baronet—that my resolution was fixed, and nothing could shake it.

Sir James shook his head. “You must suffer me, then,” he said, “to obtrude my advice still further. You have a father ;—should he not be consulted, before you take any such step as you meditate ?”

I was somewhat confused by this appeal to my filial piety ; but I evaded the question by ranting on the glory of independence, and the satisfaction I should feel in rising by my own exertions without having to mount the shoulders of father, uncle, or any other relative.

The ladies seemed delighted by this display of magnanimity ; but Sir James smiled incredulously. “Well, then,” he said, “since such is your determination, I am happy it is in my power to assist you. I am acquainted with several eminent merchants, and will use my influence to procure you such a situation as you desire,—and, believe me, you will find that influence not unnecessary—for, without a recommendation, any application you might make were sure to fail. Nay—no thanks!—or, at least, reserve them till they are actually due.”

The rest of the conversation was general. As it can be of no importance to the reader, I shall take the liberty to omit it, merely mentioning, that—on the part of Lady Arne, it was mild and ladylike—on that of Miss Payn-thurnley, most gentle—and, on that of Miss Arne, always sprightly, and often witty—while Sir James, though still dignified, seemed to have bid adieu to melancholy. The cause of this sudden change in the latter’s disposition was no mystery ; for, whenever he directed his attention to

Miss Paynthurnley—which was on every opportunity—, his voice and looks assumed a peculiar tenderness, that marked him either already in love, or not very far from such a dilemma. Indeed, since I have been accustomed to sift the motives of men's actions, I have reflected on the baronet's conduct towards me, and am come to the conclusion, that the singular interest which he seemed to take in my behalf was owing, though probably without his being aware of it, to the grateful affection with which Miss Paynthurnley honoured me, and his desire of appearing amiable in her eyes.—Were our most generous actions, dear Reader, submitted to a like scrutiny, how very few of them would be found to have their origin in feelings less selfish!

Sir James and myself rose to depart together. Lady Arne gave us a general invitation to repeat our visit; but Miss Paynthurnley, taking my hand with the affectionate familiarity of a sister, said she should expect me to call the next evening and let her know whether I had not thought better of my resolution to live independent of my uncle's favour,—and yet we had not been acquainted twelve hours! So little is Friendship indebted to Time.*

As we left the house, the baronet put my arm through his own, and began to converse upon the character of the family we had been visiting, the odd manner in which they had become known to us, and so on. Of Miss Paynthurnley he spoke, in terms that confirmed me in my opinion of the state of his heart, though he endeavoured to cloak the nature of his sentiments, perhaps even from himself, by styling them compassion for her sufferings. Lady Arne he said he knew by reputation. She was a widow, with but one child. Her fortune, though not large, was sufficiently ample to maintain herself and daughter in elegance, and to enable her to indulge in

* Except in one respect—for its dissolution. Its birth, like that of Love, is oftener of the conception of Accident than of Esteem.

many little charities. Amiable without weakness, pious without ostentation, and well-informed without pedantry, she lived retired from the gay world, beloved by the little circle of her chosen friends, and respected by all who knew her.

Just as the baronet finished this eulogium—which I am happy to assure the reader, from the personal knowledge I afterwards enjoyed of its subject, was no more than the excellent woman's due,—we arrived at the junction of another street with the one in which we were walking. Sir James stopped.

"Here we part," he said, "for my route lies in that direction. This is my address" (handing me his card),—"If you will call upon me in the course of a day or two, I shall be able to inform you of the success of my endeavours in your behalf. However, I shall be happy to see you, Mr. Levis, any time you will favour me with a visit, on another account than that of business." I thanked him warmly. We shook hands, and were about to separate. "But, once more," added the baronet, "let me advise you, my young friend, not to be too precipitate. It is easy to adopt the plan you propose to yourself—'sed'—remember!—sed revocare gradum——Hoc opus, hic labor est.'"

"I am indebted to your kindness, sir," I answered, "and will reflect upon my plans as you advise me; but I am confident it will be to no purpose——my resolution is fixed, and nothing shall make me swerve from it,"—and we parted.

——— A word, friend Jeremy, before you close the chapter.—I am sorely puzzled by your inconsistencies. Allowing your explanation in the case of the baronet to pass, I do not see how you will account to me for the following incongruity in your own case:—In the very same page, you make yourself mean enough to stoop to a petty equivocation—not to say falsehood—, where an open declaration of the truth could not have harmed you much,

and yet so proud as to court a beggarly independence, (which, by the by, is nothing more than a cheat—a dirty drab under an honest woman's name,) rather than ask forgiveness of an injured, generous uncle, and be restored at once to the arms of prosperity! —

I see how it is, most critical Reader! You are fresh from the reading of novels, where the heroes are adorned with certain fine traits of character, like the beautiful veins in your chimney-piece of Egyptian marble, which you see cross and recross one another, and meander here and there, yet are never lost sight of or blurred, except the polisher have been greatly in fault; and you are offended because you find not the same in my history. Let me warn you—if you cannot relish human nature as it is, shut my book; for here you will find man but pudding-stone. As for the ordinary, every-day being, Jeremy Levis—what can you expect to meet in him but ordinary, every-day consistency? Nay—even in those of a superior sort—such as yourself, for instance—look sharply, and what will you find? Not merely some pleasing traits of character, for ever kept in sight because they are pleasing—nor some particular passion alone, which, because it governs the whole man, must for ever be seen seated at the helm—, but those pleasing traits appearing and disappearing by fits, like the blue ether when the racking clouds pass over it,—this particular passion one time ruling itself, then resigning the rudder to another, that it may again resume it, and again resign it. Who searches for gold, and hopes to meet it ever pure and in masses? It is found in union with other and baser metals—imbedded deep in fissures of the solid rock—or scattered in grains through the countless sands of rivers.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith
Wi' rattlin an' wi' thumpin !
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stampin an' he's jumpin !
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd up snout,
His eldritch squeel and gestures,
O how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plasters,
On sic a day !
BURNS.

I soon became a constant visiter at Lady Arne's ; for that amiable woman appeared to have conceived for me a fondness equal to her sister's, and, when my daily duties were over (for Sir James, agreeably to his word, had procured me such an employment as I desired), I loved to betake myself to a house where I was always sure of a welcome, and spend an hour or two in a society so agreeably different from any I had hitherto known—a society where the many little attentions I received could spring from no such motives as had given rise to the civilities that were so profusely lavished on me by every body, when I was accounted my uncle's heir.

Owing to this beneficial intercourse, a gradual change took place in my manners. I began to repent me of my boyish follies, I assumed a manliness more suited to my years, and I resolved to lead a course of life that should do me honour. Often indeed, when listening to the motherly counsels of Lady Arne, I was prompted, in the fullness of my feelings, to confess the mean deceit of which I had been guilty, and tell her my whole history as it really was ; but, then, the wakeful demon of my pride

would lay his heavy hand upon my heart, and repress its honest beating.

The baronet I met but once or twice at her ladyship's. The infrequency of his visits I attributed to his wish to subdue an affection so unhappily misplaced upon the wife of the preacher, and I was fully convinced of the truth of my conjecture, when, on the visits which I occasionally paid him not more from gratitude than a love for his society, he invariably turned the discourse to Miss Payn-thurnley, with an artfulness that amused me, even while I most regretted its cause.

As for myself, I soon found at Lady Arne's an attraction which I had not foreseen. This was her ladyship's daughter.

Mary Arne was not beautiful—at least, not, in the sense in which that epithet is usually applied; for her person wanted the rounded symmetry that constitutes a fine figure, and her features were irregular: but then, in lieu of other attractions, her slender form possessed, to a remarkable degree, that peculiar air which I have said distinguished her aunt, and in her expressive face every emotion of her innocent heart, as soon as it rose, was painted with so much fidelity that you saw into her character almost at a glance. Add a high and finely-turned neck and falling shoulders (those essentials to gracefulness of carriage), and, moreover, a skin pure as an infant's, and a hand and foot the very copies of her aunt's, and you may form some idea of what I consider a lovely though not a beautiful woman. These personal charms, however, might have made no impression upon me, had they not been seconded by the amiability of her deportment; but when, from the frequent opportunities I had of observing her, I became acquainted with her many unobtrusive virtues, I yielded unconsciously, and, before I was aware of the extent to which I had submitted, found myself fast bound, a half-willing slave to the united force of her attractions.

I have hinted that Mary Arne was gay in disposition :—she was, indeed, blessed with an unceasing flow of spirits ; but there are certain limits beyond which gayety becomes displeasing, except in childhood, and beyond these limits she never suffered herself to be carried. Though possessed of wit, she never indulged it at the expense of another's feelings ; though modest, she knew well there was a degree of confidence that becomes a woman ; and, though accomplished—far beyond the sense in which the word is usually employed by young ladies—she was the only woman I ever knew (with, perhaps, one—or two—exceptions) totally devoid of affectation.

I recall these merits of my sainted Mary with the more pleasure, that, when I look around me, I see the rising generation of Misses either stupid as the dolls they have prematurely thrown aside, or sarcastically ill-natured,—either shamefaced as raw country girls, or fashionably impudent,—and either dunces on every subject but that of dress, or so languid from affectation that they have just strength to lisp the French for sweetmeats, or to roll their eyes in ravishment at the fine movements of an Italian cantata. Pout not thy lip in anger, fair Reader ;—though a sexagenarian, I am no “*laudator temporis acti*”—the which, for thy better comprehension, I may render—a moralizing old fool that shakes his head sagaciously at every trifle that chimes not with his own stale notions of propriety, and mutters “Things were very different in my day.” In *my* day—that is, when I never moved among the girls without making them smirk, or feel anxious for the success of their smiles and nicely-powdered curls—in *my* day, sweet one, know for thy consolation, young ladies were not a whit more sensible——than they are now.

The great charm, however, that drew my affections to Miss Arne, was a certain artlessness of manners that marked her unsophisticated by too early or too familiar an acquaintance with the world. Most persons, I am well aware, admire women *who have been a great deal in society*

(as it is termed); they like the smile and word that are for every body—the skill in conversation that so readily adapts itself to the taste of each individual, and, without appearing to be directed particularly to any one, flatters each alike in turn. Such women, it is true, are admirable in one respect;—they give most unexceptionable parties: *there* all the company is happy—for every member, however unworthy, finds himself become a person of importance—: but such women I never did like, and never shall like—for there is no trusting to their professions; they speak you fair—their words sparkle like true gems—but hold them up to the light, and they will be found to be a string of mere paste—all lies from one end to the other.

Je vous parle un peu franc; mais c'est là mon humeur,
Et je ne mâche point ce que j'ai sur le cœur.

The extent of my love for Mary Arne might have remained unknown to me for some time, but for a little circumstance. One Saturday evening I was at Lady Arne's, when, the discourse happening to fall upon a fashionable preacher, a young man, who had so turned the heads of the pliant sex that they flocked to hear him, as formerly the stocks and stones did to Orpheus, her ladyship mentioned that the clergyman in question was to officiate the next day and invited me to a seat in her pew. I availed myself of the invitation.—In my youth I was not over righteous, as the reader will readily believe; but I ever entertained a feeling of reverence for the offices of religion and for those that exercised them with unfeigned piety, and when a lovely woman was the worshipper — Heavens! I could gaze on her for ever. Think not, most cynical reader, that when I turned with disgust from the bowed heads of the females around me, because I saw that the most of those females were engaged far otherwise than in prayer—peeping through the parted fingers of their clasped hands at the young men, or arranging a

disordered curl, or improving the folds of their ruffles, or studying the fashion of a neighbour's hat, or, perhaps, meditating on to-morrow's ball, or conjecturing how they would look in the new dresses which Mrs. Mantua was making, or, perhaps, wrapped in thoughts still more unmeet for a church—Think not, that, when I turned from these to the kneeling form of Mary Arne, and gazed with delight upon her folded hands that were so delicate, and her upraised dewy eyes, and her rich half-opened lips, it was because those hands, and eyes, and lips I admired in themselves—for I have said that Mary was not beautiful, and there were many on every side of me that well deserved that epithet—no! it was because those delicate hands were folded, and those dewy eyes were upraised, and those rich lips were half-opened, in the mute eloquence of adoration; nor that I gazed upon the form that knelt beside me, because that form was Mary Arne's,—but because I had discovered, in her whose character I so esteemed, a new virtue, which, precious in itself, added tenfold to the value of the others. It is probable, I do not deny, that had the circumstances been other than they were, my admiration would have been less ardent; for as Religion added to the charms of Youth and Loveliness, Youth and Loveliness returned the favour by giving new lustre to Religion.

We look upon the piety of old age as something in ordinary course.—Strange were it indeed, if, when the passions that stand between him and his Maker are all removed, and the sources of enjoyment in this world choked up with the drought of time, man should not strike the tent of his wanderings, and make ready for his flight across the desert, to where a greener spot is promised him and springs of ever-running water! Strange indeed, if, when he is within a league, a mile, a rod—if, when he stands upon the very brink of the well, and all that is asked of him, that he may drink and be filled, is repentance of the past—to give up his spear and his steed, and

wander no more, but fix his thoughts upon the promised land till the moment shall come when he may be admitted to its blessings—strange, if he should loiter till the hot Sirocco rise and sweep him to the burnt soil before the very door of his dwelling! True, as the distance lessens between him and the end of his last journey, he will look back with regret to the barren sands which habit hath endeared to him, and sigh to revisit the dry channel where the streams of his happiness once flowed; but, when the well is close before him, and the moment comes when he must drink or perish—can he hesitate? So is it not with youth.—While the passions flutter, on their rainbow-coloured wings, between his eyes and heaven, and the fountain of pleasure still bubbles, sparkling, to the brim, hard is it for man to turn his thoughts to a distant land, of whose beauty he can form no fancy, and whose springs he cannot think are sweeter than his own—hard is it for him to believe, when he courses gaily from one green spot to another, and sees many still before him, that all these resting-places must soon fail him, that soon every blade of grass will be withered, and every running-stream exhausted. It is only when his last resource of enjoyment fails, and the fear of perishing assails his shivering breast, and he casts his eye abroad upon the desert, and sees nought before him but endless desolation—it is only then that the promise of a brighter country sounds joyful to his ear.—In youth religion is so truly rare that our admiration is involuntary. It is the same plant that flourishes in old age; but in the latter it is so common that we pass it by unnoticed, while in the former we prize its beauty because it is exotic. Still more interesting is it when with youth is joined the grace of loveliness. But, when to youth and loveliness is added affection for the soil where it blossoms, then religion is indeed superlatively beautiful.

Hitherto Love had stolen so gently upon me, that I was scarcely aware of his approaches; but now, he ad-

vanced boldly, threw his fetters round my heart, locked the clasp, and I was at once his slave without the hope of ransom. I felt an oppression, even to sickness, as I gazed upon the object of my adoration (for, alas! I sat in the house of God to worship there the creature not the creator); the hot tears filled my eyes, and dimmed them, but would not fall:—and I rejoiced when the conclusion of the prayers relieved me from feelings that were so little suited to the time and place in which they were indulged.—Am I extravagant, dear Reader? If you be, or ever have been, a lover, you will not think so.

The Revd. Mr. Sciolus ascended the pulpit; and, as I could no longer with decency lean my head upon my hand, I was obliged to pay attention to the sermon, lest my emotions should betray me.—To show my reader that in those days Fashion was about as good a judge of pulpit-eloquence as she is in these, I will give such a specimen of our minister's style as my memory will permit me.

Mr. Sciolus, to evince his contempt for the ordinary mode of preaching, usually commenced with a preface.

“Christian Brethren!——” Here he paused, to allow time for the usual round of coughing and spitting by the senior part of the congregation. He then looked confidently around him for a second, and, having thus gathered the attention of his audience, proceeded:—

“Christian Brethren!—There is a period in the life of every man, when, looking back upon the distance he has trodden in the weary round to the Valley of Shadows, he finds that all that has hitherto delighted him upon the way, all that he has toiled so hardly to obtain, and all that, when obtained, he has sought so anxiously to preserve, are dwindled down to nothing in his sight, and feels that he may apply, to his whole past life, the words of the Emperor Titus—‘I have lost a day.’ In the bitterness of such feelings, and in the disappointment of such retrospection, was it that the wise son of David—the fa-

voured both of God and man—he who had sifted every kind of knowledge to its last grain, and drained each cup of pleasure to its dregs—exclaimed,

“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun : and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.”

“I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem : yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.”

“And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. I perceive that this also is vexation of spirit.”

“Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

Ecclesiastes—first chapter—14th, 16th, 17th, and second verses.

“The ancient Egyptians——” Our reverend paused again, to warn his hearers that something important was to follow.—“The ancient Egyptians, Christian Brethren, had a custom—as the Father of History tells us—of carrying round to each of the guests in succession, at the banquets of the wealthy, a small coffin containing a representation of a dead body—thus reminding them, even in the midst of festivity, of the nothingness of all earthly pleasures.*—— Yes, my brethren! look around you, and—— within you,—— and say, what is man? He riseth, like the day-star in the morning, at first but feeble, shineth gaily in his mid-day splendour, and at evening sinks beneath the horizon—leaving behind him no track of his late brilliant course, save a short-lived memory, the few tints of beauty that yet linger on the clouds that darkened his setting. You, who stand upon the brink of eternity, look back and tell me what you see! Is that arid waste the luxurious field whose prospect so delighted you, when your hair was black and glossy as the raven’s wing, and no wrinkle broke the smoothness of your ruddy

* The Revd. Mr. Sciolus would seem to have imitated the example of certain of his name among the laity, in quoting just such a portion of his author as he might shape to his particular purpose. Herodotus does more justice to the good sense of the Egyptians, than to make them contemn pleasure because it could not last for ever. He tells us the bearer of the coffin, showing it to each of the guests, said—*Εἰς τοῦτον ὀφείλω, πίνει ἔσται καὶ εὐφραίνεται· ἔσθαι γὰρ ἀποθανὼν τοῖστος.* *Cast thine eyes on this, and drink and be happy; for such shalt thou be after death.* This was certainly very philosophical advice, and pretty much resembles the “Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die.”

cheek, and you enjoyed in anticipation what you have since tasted—tasted, to find it insipid—? You had riches :—was your step lighter, or your heart more joyous, than that of the mendicant whose food was but the sweepings of your kitchen? You had power :—was your freedom greater than theirs whose actions were limited by your control? For you Fame wreathed her freshest laurels :—did they circle an unaching brow?— And what must be the end of all this? Pleasure has fled from you wherever you have stepped, and Sorrow has been your companion in her stead,—and yet you stand unbroken by the storm : but an hour cometh—nay, is even now at hand!—when you may no longer resist its violence ; and what then will avail the trifles you have set such store by? Your power and your fame must perish with you, and your wealth will become the property—perhaps of strangers! Thus fares it with the richly-laden ship :—Smoothly she starts upon her voyage ; the waters sparkle round her as glad of her passing, and the light breeze dances in the swelling sails ; every eye admires her beauty, and looks with confidence upon her strength. But soon she is out upon the open ocean ; the wild winds gather, and the waves awake ; her boasted strength exposes her more surely to the storm which the lighter bark rides out in safety, and the very wealth wherewith she is laden adds to her danger ; yet the gallant vessel, though sorely tossed, struggles awhile with her distresses, till a fiercer tempest strikes her, and she sinks for ever. Her wealth, her strength, her beauty—perish with her ; or, if some relics of the former float to shore, they are gathered by the hands of those who rejoice at her disaster. The storm is over ; the sun breaks out upon the vast expanse ; and other vessels sail in safety on the very spot of the wreck, yet know it not !

‘Vanity,’ my brethren—‘Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.’”

The rest of Mr. Sciolus's sermon was pretty much in the same chaste style. He refreshed our schoolboy knowledge with the names of Jupiter, Juno, Venus, and half-a-dozen other heathen deities—treated us to a most classical simile, in which he compared the Christian faith to the Palladium, which fell from heaven, and on whose preservation the safety of Troy depended—let us know that he had read the Orlando Furioso, and the Jerusalem Delivered, by several illustrations drawn from those ecclesiastical writings—quoted three lines from Milton's Paradise Lost—and, in conclusion, repeated, with clasped hands and tears in his eyes, the whole of Pope's Dying Christian.

"Well Mr. Levis," said Lady Arne, as her ladyship's carriage took the direction to Upper Grosvenor-street, "what think you of our new divine?"

"Would Lady Arne have my candid opinion?"

"Certainly; I am not so partial to Mr. Sciolus but that I can bear to hear him criticised—for I see, by your countenance, I must not expect an eulogy upon him."

"Well then, madam, my opinion is, that he enjoys a popularity altogether unmerited. I can only account for it by presuming, that, as the greater part of every congregation are but overgrown babies, they are easily caught by the tinsel ornaments with which Mr. Sciolus so liberally tricks his discourses.—But I do not quarrel with his embellishments so much as with the sources whence many of them are derived. One would suppose he had been bred a schoolmaster, by the eagerness with which he presses into his service, on every occasion, such little scraps of learning as he happens to possess. His quotations from Herodotus and Suetonius, as well as his illustrations drawn from Ariosto and Tasso, are bad enough—and so far his pedantry is ridiculous; but, when he proceeds to rake up the heathen mythology, to furnish himself with one or two *classical* comparisons, it becomes absolutely disgusting. This abominable corruption of

taste is the less pardonable, since, with the Bible in his hand, no man can ever be in want of appropriate rhetorical beauties to embellish a sermon."

"I am very much of your opinion, Mr. Levis," said her ladyship,—“but Miss Arne seems to differ from us.”

"Pardon me," said the young lady,—“I allow the general correctness of Mr. Levis's remarks; but he appears to me to bear too hard upon the poor minister. He finds fault with his oratory, and gives him no credit for his evident zeal in the discharge of his duties. I believe Mr. Sciolus to be strictly pious; and, therefore, I cannot but listen to him with pleasure.”

"And what says Mr. Levis to this?" asked her ladyship; for, in spite of my politeness, and the dread I had of offending Miss Arne, I could not repress a smile at the latter's defence of the clergyman.

"If Miss Arne will permit me ——"

"O, you have Miss Arne's full permission," said the young lady, smiling good naturedly.

"I would then say, that she judges of the purity of his zeal by her own piety. I do not deny that Mr. Sciolus is as sincere as the generality of the clergy; but that is saying very little for him, since I am convinced that these pulpit-orators have not at heart the good of their audience, but the display of their own eloquence. Miss Arne did not notice, perhaps, how our divine hurried through the Litany—his thoughts, doubtless, all centered in the coat-pocket where his sermon was deposited.—But I do not blame the reverend gentleman for this, so much as I do his hearers. They should remember that their object in attending church should be to meet together for prayer, not to canvass the merits of this or that preacher;—prayer is their duty, and a sermon is added merely to enforce that duty, and to direct them in the path of virtue.—I remember being present at my uncle, the physician's, when a friend of his asked him if he had been to hear a certain popular preacher. "No, sir!" answered

the Doctor, with some sharpness,—“when I go to church, I go to pray—not to listen to a schoolboy’s ranting.”

“But the emotions with which he appeared to be choking in many parts of his discourse?—his tears?”

“Had he been hearer, Miss Arne, and not speaker, you had witnessed a very different behaviour. It was not the subject that moved him, but the eloquent manner in which he thought he handled it. If you will pardon *my* pedantry, I would say that Mr. Sciolus seems to have followed, very literally, the advice of an ancient poet—*If you would have me weep, you must first be moved with grief yourself.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Touch. Truly, young gentleman, though there was no greater matter in the ditty, yet the note was very untuneable.

1. *Pags.* You are deceived, sir; we kept time, we lost not our time.

Touch. By my troth, yes; I count it but time lost to hear such a foolish song. God be with you: and God mend your voices.

As You Like It.

D. Père. Vous savez pui était celui qui donnait cette sérénade?

Isid. Non pas; mais qui que ce puisse être, je lui suis obligée.

Le Sicilien.

I HAD NOW known Mary Arne about two months. It was too short a time, certainly, to expect any return of my affection, even supposing she had any disposition that way; yet certain little circumstances, which I had observed with the eye of a lover, led me to believe that I was not altogether indifferent to her, and I longed to discover the real place which I held in her sentiments:—not that I had the vanity to think that any good could result from such a discovery, even were it most favourable, when the distance was so great between our stations; but I

said to myself, with the wisdom usual on such occasions, — It will be a satisfaction at least to know.— Accident favoured my wishes.

Among other accomplishments, Miss Arne sang exquisitely. One evening, shortly after the incidents recorded in the last chapter, I was present at Lady Arne's, when her ladyship requested her daughter to repeat a serenade, which she had sung for her a little while before I came. Miss Arne took her guitar, and complied. I was profuse in my expressions of admiration.

"I am glad you like it," said the young lady, with that modest frankness which was so amiable in my eyes,— "for it is a great favourite of mine."

Instantly the thought struck me that I might make this very song the fathom-line for sounding her sentiments towards me.—That the Reader, however, may understand my plan of operations, I must inform him, that during the time I resided with my uncle Jeremy, I was not altogether idle ; I had masters in Italian, Spanish, French, drawing, and music. In the latter, particularly, I was thought to have made some progress ; and, as I piqued myself upon the excellence of my voice, the guitar was my favourite instrument.— Well then, I went to a music-store, hired a guitar, and purchased a copy of the serenade ; and the next evening I adapted new words to the notes, and practised the latter till I had made them familiar to me.

The third night came, and, just as I wished it, still, without a cloud. I wrapped my cloak around me—for it was now the latter part of September, and the night air was somewhat chilly—, hid my guitar in its folds, like a true hero of romance, and proceeding to Lady Arne's, stationed myself directly beneath the windows, in the dark shade made by the angle of the steps. The hour was favourable—it was past twelve ; and the street was utterly deserted. So I forthwith struck the instrument, by way of prelude, to a lively air of which I knew Miss Arne to be particularly fond. This had the effect desired ; for

presently a window above me was opened, cautiously, as if by some person who feared to be overheard. Believing, now, I had attracted her attention, I at once discontinued the air, and sang the following

SERENADE.

Look forth from thy window, my Mary, love!
The stars to invite thee are bright above;
When all earth is quiet, as earth may be,
I wake, my love Mary, to sing to thee.

Then listen, sweet, listen,
Nor turn thee away—
I may tell thee by night
What I dare not by day;
For the blush on thy cheek,
That unbidden may steal
For the vows I shall utter,
Night's shade will conceal.

Mary, I love thee!—Nay, shrink not to hear
The passionate breathings that meet thine ear!
Their flight may startle the niceness of pride—
But Love will not brook that his wings be tied.

Then list to me, Mary,
Nor prove thee unkind:
Through the hours of day
Thou art ever in mind—
Thy form hovers near,
When I turn me to sleep—
From visions that torture,
I wake but to weep.

But for thee, love—may angel dreams of light
Press with velvet fingers thine eyes to night.
To me, unhappy, such rest may not be—
I retire, love Mary, to think—on thee.

“We were favoured with a serenade last night,” said Lady Arne, when the next evening I artfully turned the discourse upon music,—“I did not hear it myself, for my apartments are in the back part of the house; but Miss Arne tells me it was delightful. Why, upon my word, Mr. Levis, if you colour so highly, I shall begin to think

we are indebted to your gallantry for it! Do you sing at all?"

As I prepared to answer, I could perceive, by a stealthy glance, that Miss Arne was leaning forward, in expectation of my words, with an eagerness which her countenance knew not how to dissemble.

"No, madam," I boldly replied—and I stole another glance at Mary. Her sunny features were clouded on the instant.

CHAPTER XXIX.

O Marion's a bonnie lass;
And the blyth blinks in her ee:
And fain wad I marrie Marion,
Gin Marion wad marrie mee.

Old Scottish Song.

—BEWARE, friend Jeremy, how you hug yourself on this discovery! Mary Arne probably returns your affection;—but what then? will her mother be induced to smile on your desires? Her ladyship has, I grant, conceived an uncommon affection for you; she has, undoubtedly, inquired whether you really are what you represent yourself to be, and learning that your family is as reputable, though not so high in rank, as her own, has always welcomed you on the footing of the most favoured visiter: but, do not deceive yourself—Lady Arne is indeed a most amiable woman, and one of too sound a judgment to sacrifice her daughter's happiness to riches; yet she has the pride so natural to every mother, and looks forward to no ordinary establishment for her only child. Were you your uncle's heir indeed, you might stand some chance of success; but you have played the fool, and

now you must abide by the consequence. Depend upon it, Jeremy, your best policy is to endeavour to forget, as soon as possible, this misplaced attachment.— These suggestions were made by Reason, as I lay in my bed, congratulating myself on the success of the musical experiment mentioned in the last chapter. And what said Love? O, he had just been listening to the counsels of his “fidus Achates” Hope, and his language was, — Never despair, Jeremy! Secure the lady. Were you as rich as Cræsus, you are yet too young to marry. Two or three years may make a great change in your circumstances; some lucky chance may occur for your speedily enriching yourself; and then——! Secure the lady, Jeremy.— I was inclining to the side of the last speaker, when Honour thundered forth, — Jeremy! Jeremy! you forget yourself. Are you insensible to Lady Arne’s goodness?—Has not her ladyship honoured you with her friendship, under circumstances when, perhaps, you would have found it impossible to be admitted to any other reputable society? Does she not display for you an attachment, which, considering the little time that has elapsed since its planting, may be said to flourish with a singular vigour? And, now, would you requite her for her kindness by seducing the affections of her only child?—Never think of such a step! Be a man, Jeremy: spurn the subtle tempter!— And what said Love to this?—Reader do you know Love? Well then, you know he cares no more for Honour than he does for Reason. When they stand in his way, he thrusts them aside without ceremony; or, if they happen to be too strong for so abrupt a mode of proceeding, he, being a little fellow, creeps between their legs, and *thus* gets to the other side of them.

So the result of this conflict of counsel between Love, Reason, and Honour, was that the next day found me, at even tide, on my way to Upper Grosvenor-street. I was so intimate at Lady Arne’s, that the door was usually

opened to me as to one of the family ; for, if her ladyship or Miss Arne chanced to be from home, I was pretty sure of seeing Miss Paynthurley.

On the present occasion, the servant showed me into the drawing-room, and, without waiting to see whether any of the family were there, shut the door upon me, and retired. The room was lighted only by the mellow lustre of the full moon, which streamed through the open window. At this window Miss Arne was seated in a pensive attitude—her head resting on her hand. I approached with a throbbing heart, and took my chair at a little distance from her. After there had passed between us the compliments and other pretty nothings that usually open every interview between two persons of opposite sexes, “You see,” said Miss Arne gayly, “I have bid my levity adieu for this evening, and am become quite romantic, sitting in the moonlight meditating.”

“On such a night as this, Miss Arne,”—I exclaimed—“who would not loosen, for awhile, the cords that bind the imagination to the barren shores of this life, and set it adrift to seek, in an ideal world, for fresher scenes ? To me one hour passed in such delicious revery is worth whole days of ordinary existence !”

“I perceive Mr. Levis, you are more sensitive to the influence of the planet than even I am. You speak *feelingly* upon the subject.”

“Indeed Miss Arne,” I answered, slightly nettled at the tone of irony in which her words had been uttered.” I speak *feelingly* because I speak *truly*. Thoughtless as I am, I better love the luxurious melancholy, which moonlight ever sheds upon my senses, than the dearest of those enjoyments which the world knows as pleasures. And—am I not deceived ?—Miss Arne, notwithstanding her ridicule, can readily sympathize with me in such feelings.” The young lady’s levity was gone at once.

“Such feelings I am far from ridiculing, I do assure you, Mr. Levis. It was—excuse me—It was the sud,

denness of your enthusiasm that struck me as singular." She paused, and, turning aside her head, resumed the attitude in which she was sitting when I entered the room.—After a minute or two, she added—"You are not deceived, Mr. Levis—I am ever sad on such a night as this; and now—I know not why—my feelings are peculiarly depressed."

Opportunity, my Reader, is every thing in affairs of the heart. Solitude and moonlight will at once make tender the interchange of words and looks between the self-same parties, who, at a ball or in broad day, might talk and gaze, and gaze and talk, for hours together, without the slightest sensation* being excited in the breast of either. Presuming that no respectable man or woman, who has passed the experienced age of thirty, and is not over and above addicted to lying, will venture to impugn this doctrine, I proceed to say, that, if such is the effect where no previous impression has been made, what must it be where passion has already been kindled within the breast? The very declaration, which under any other circumstances I might not have dared to offer, and which, if offered, Miss Arne would probably have treated as presumption, was now, through the gentle influence of 'soft stillness and the night,' advanced with boldness and received without displeasure.

I drew my chair nearer to Mary. "On such a night as this," I said, or rather whispered, in the soft yet fervent tones of passion—"On such a night as this—methinks every duller feeling should sleep, and nought wake upon the earth but Love. The very air seems perfumed with

* SENSATION. *n. s.* The technical word for that fluttering of the spirits, which comes we know not how, and goes we scarce know when, and is excited by an individual of one sex in an individual of the other.

O, my dear Lady Anne, whom do you think we had last night at the Duchess's? whom but that dear, delightful, foreign creature—Il Conte Coxcombe. He produced quite a *sensation* I do assure you.

A PEEP AT THE BRAUMONDE.

his breath, and the breeze that stirs so gently you might almost suppose the fanning of his wings.—Do you remember, Miss Arne, that beautiful scene in the ‘Merchant of Venice,’ which commences thus:—

“ In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise ————— ” ?

How happy must be that fond pair, who, seated like Lorenzo and his Jessica, at the moonlight hour, when no eye is near to mark their attachment—no ear to listen to its soft endearments—renew their mutual vows, or retrace the scene of that sweet moment when their faith was first plighted to each other !”

“ Happy indeed !” murmured Miss Arne unconsciously. I took her hand—and she did not withdraw it.

“ Dear Miss Arne ! why may not we be happy even as they are pictured to have been—fate hath not more divided us ?”

She spoke not ; but a single tear fell hot upon my hand.

“ Mary !—dearest Mary !” I continued, as I knelt beside her, and kissed with rapture the delicate fingers which now faintly struggled in my pressure—“ you do not think my love presumption ? you will suffer me to hope, that, if a day shall come when fortune shall smile upon me, you will not reject me ?——Speak, Miss Arne ! shall it not be so ? Will you not give me this hope ? Will you not bid me prove myself worthy of you ?—Think, my Mary, what must be my exertions when the prize I strive for is —— !”

At that instant steps were heard approaching. I sprang to my feet ; the door opened ; and the servant entered the room with lights. I stole a glance at Mary ;—she was still seated, with her head depressed upon her bosom, and the hand I had held lying just as I had dropped it.

Then, without daring to bid her adieu lest my voice should falter, I took up my hat and left the house.

I walked, without knowing whither I was going ; for my whole thoughts were centered in the one conviction that Mary loved me ; nor did that sure friend, but unpleasant adviser—Reason—intrude, for one moment, to snatch the cup of happiness from my lips and show me the black dregs that lay thick upon the bottom. “She loves me !” —I said to myself—and myself echoed back my own words :—“She loves me !” Such being the state of mind I was in, the Reader, who is acquainted with my Stagyrite propensity, will not wonder that I walked completely beyond the city without being aware of it.

I was startled from my reverie by a voice that bade me “Stop !”, while a hand, grasping my collar, roughly turned me round and made me face the speaker. He was a short, but strongly built man, and masked ; and, as his left hand detained me his right was armed with a pistol. My first movement was to release myself, and by a sudden effort I easily succeeded in the attempt ; but the fellow instantly recovered his grasp, and held me so firmly that I could not stir—while, forgetting in his precipitation the disguise he had evidently assumed when calling to me to stop, he cried in a voice which it struck me I had somewhere heard before :—“Come, this won’t do !—Your money !”—and, to enforce his application, he put the muzzle of his pistol to my breast.—“No staring !” (he added—again feigning coarseness) “out with the dust, my brave one !”

Under other circumstances I might have yielded at once ; for the slender stock I had about me, though my little all, was hardly to be put in balance with my life : but then the nature of this attack—made as it was in the full moonlight, and in a situation where persons were likely to pass every minute—while it excited my surprise, suggested that the villain would not dare to proceed to any lengths, and that, could I but disarm him, he

would, in all probability, take to flight—especially as the sound of wheels approaching was now distinctly heard. Instead, then, of complying with his demand, I suddenly seized the barrel of the pistol, and depressed it. “Fool!” exclaimed the robber—and on the instant the pistol was discharged, and the ball entered my thigh. The weapon was then wrenched from my relaxing grasp—my head received a heavy blow with the butt end of it—and I fell senseless to the ground.

CHAPTER XXX.

*Veranni, omnibus è meis amicis
Antistans mihi milibus trecentis—*

CATULLUS.

WHEN I opened my eyes, I found myself in a strange room by an open window, and in the arms of a man; while near me stood a boy and several females. I looked upward to the face of him who supported me—and I knew him at once. It was my old schoolmate, Edward Clayton!

“Edward!” I cried. I could articulate no more; for my emotions choked me. Clayton pressed my hand in silence; then, motioning for the females to withdraw, he raised me in his arms, with as much ease as though I were an infant, and carried me to a bed which stood in the apartment.

“Hush!” he said, perceiving I was about to speak,—“You must not thus excite yourself.—” But I was not to be restrained. Regardless of my wound, I half rose, and stretching out my arms to him, faltered “A second time, Edward—I owe my life to you?” Clayton folded me in his embrace; then, gently replacing my head upon

the pillow, "Nay," he said, "dear Jeremy—you only agitate yourself, and distress me. You owe me no thanks; I am but acting in the ordinary course of my profession. —Again?—Do, for God's sake, lie quiet, till I have examined your wound! I have done nothing for it as yet—except tying my handkerchief about it."

The injury I had received was pronounced to be severe but not dangerous—the ball having passed in an oblique direction, and not touched the bone. When the operations of dressing my wound and undressing me were over, and I was nicely tucked up in bed, and the boy had left the room, "Edward," I said, "now that I have submitted to your kindness as quietly as you wished me, tell me, what did you mean when you said you were *but acting in the ordinary course of your profession*? Are you a surgeon?"

"To be sure I am," answered Edward, laughing at the simplicity of my question,—“both physician and surgeon at your service. But you shall know all about it to-morrow: and, in return for the favour, you shall tell me your story when you can bear the exertion. There will be plenty of time for the task; for your cure will be tedious, and I am determined to keep you till it is thoroughly effected."

"O, I cannot think ——!"

"Nonsense! You are now my patient, Mr. Jeremy—and I shall hardly permit you to put yourself under the care of others, that they may have all the credit of your cure."

The delicacy, wherewith Clayton sought to veil his kindness, affected me almost to tears. I pressed his hand, with a warmth that spoke my feelings. "But, Edward, you are not aware of the trouble I shall cost you. I am not my own master, and, if I remain with you, my absence will excite alarm; so that, to prevent my being advertized in the public prints, you will have to pay a visit to my employers."

“And that I will do most readily. To-morrow you shall give me their address, and I will make it my first business to let them know you are in safety.”

“And—and—besides, I have friends who will be most anxious about me.—Do you know Lady Arne!”

“No, but I can introduce myself to her ladyship if it be necessary.”

“Thank you, thank you, dear Edward! And—and—I would have you observe how Miss—that is—I mean—I would have you call on Lady Arne.”

“Ah! is it so, my friend?” exclaimed Clayton, laughing,—“a young lady in the case?—Fie, man! never blush about it!—Well, I will observe her—this “Miss—that is—I mean—”. Good night—good night.” And he left me to dream that I stood beside Mary Arne at the nuptial altar, with a hole in my right thigh from which the blood was running like a little rill, and that Clayton officiated as priest, having before him a rag with gilded edges instead of the book of Common Prayer.

CHAPTER XXXI.

I knew him as myself ; for, from our infancy,
 We have convers'd, and spent our hours together :
 And though myself have been an idle truant ;
 Omitting the sweet benefit of time,
 To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection ;
 Yet hath Sir Proteus, for that's his name,
 Made use and fair advantage of his days ;
 His years but young, but his experience old ;
 His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe ;
 And, in a word, (for far behind his worth
 Come all the praises that I now bestow,)
 He is complete in feature, and in mind,
 With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

THE next day Edward fulfilled his promise, by giving me an account of his life, as it had passed from the period when my quitting school had dissolved our acquaintance. As there is nothing in the story that can interest the reader, I will merely give such parts of it as suffice to explain certain passages in these memoirs.

The reason of my having seen him but once in the long interval of ten years, from the period just referred to, is thus :—He went to Eton. Afterwards, when the education his father's limited means afforded him was finished, and he had chosen a profession, the family removed to London, in order to give him an opportunity of pursuing his studies to the best advantage. When he was nineteen, his only parent died, and, in the succeeding year, Edward paid a visit to his native village to make arrangements for the sale of the estate which was left him. It was during this visit that he perilled his life to save mine. Having disposed of his little property, he purchased a place at a short distance from the metropolis.—There he was now residing with an old maiden aunt,

and two sisters, both of whom were younger than himself.—***

I would fain draw upon my memory for two or three of the conversations, which I had with Clayton during my convalescence; but I have devoted so much space to the other personages in this first volume, that the chief part of my information, on the character and habits of my friend, I am forced to condense into the present chapter.

A passionate love of distinction was the focus into which all the rays of his character converged. It was ever before his thoughts, it animated all his actions, and, in all probability, would have given an artificial tone to his manners, but for a certain simplicity he possessed, almost boyish, and the more to be admired as it was little to be expected in a man so ambitious. He was the proudest being I have ever known; he desired the good opinion of every one, but would not stoop to sue for it; generous, he loved to confer benefits, but studiously avoided receiving the most trifling favour. This independent spirit was strong even in boyhood. So much so (his relatives have told me) that it seemed to oppress him that he should be supported by his father! and he was ever devising some scheme for maintaining himself.

His pride gave to his manners an appearance of coldness and reserve; but those who ventured to address him found, to their surprise, that in disposition he was most friendly, and so open-hearted that there needed but little art to draw from him his most secret thoughts:

He was naturally affectionate. Indeed this disposition seemed to extend to the whole animal creation. He would never permit his study to be cleaned of cobwebs, because the spiders might suffer by the operation; I have known him to sit for half-an-hour in a most uneasy position, afraid to move his chair, lest he should wake the cat which lay sleeping under it; often too he has stopped to raise a fly, that had fallen on its back and was struggling to

right itself; and I have seen him turn out of his path to avoid treading on a worm.

Honourable he was without spot. He shrunk from even the thought of a meanness.—One evening, when he was seated by my bed-side lost in reflection, he suddenly sprang from his chair, his face suffused with crimson, and, clenching his hand, struck his forehead violently, muttering something to himself that I could not distinctly hear. “Edward—what is the matter?” I asked.....“I was thinking of a little circumstance that happened when we were in school together.”.....“And what was that, Edward?” He hesitated for some moments. “Cordery praised me one day, before the whole school, for a translation in Anacreon ——”.....“And is there any thing so unpleasant in the recollection of *that*?” said I, interrupting him, with a laugh.....“No; but I suffered him to think it was mine, when it was my father’s.” And all this shame was for a fault committed ten years before!—a fault, which few boys would have scrupled to commit, and fewer men have blushed at remembering.

Now, for the reverse of the picture:—He was arbitrary. He would have modelled every one’s feelings by his own, and seemed surprised when any one presumed to differ from him.—There was no offence he would not sooner pardon than a want of respect.—Then he was too apt to pride himself upon his virtues, and was little gentle to the failings of others. And, though affectionate, the most trivial fault in his friends—even such as he himself was most subject to—was sufficient to disgust him with them:—but, then, it must be acknowledged, on the other side again, that if his disgust was readily excited it was as readily laid aside,—for Edward was the most placable of human beings.

I have thus given the chief points in my friend’s moral character. His intellectual qualities were of a rarer excellence. Nature had given him an universal genius; he never attempted any thing in which he did not succeed.

His ambition however was solely directed to eminence in the literary world ; and, for the present, poetry engrossed all his efforts.—And it was in these talents that his pride most displayed itself ; for he could not bear to hear himself spoken of as possessing them. To explain the seeming paradox in this assertion, I will relate one of many little anecdotes which I treasure respecting him. His poetical abilities had been well known at Eton. Hence, when he went into society, Edward found that his fame had gone before him ; and he was often pestered by compliments upon his talents, especially from his female acquaintance. One evening, when he happened to be at a little party with his sisters, a lady very innocently asked him, before several strangers, whether he still sacrificed to the muses. This, of course, turned the eyes of every one upon our poet, and thereby gave him particular offence. On their return home, one of his sisters, who from familiarity with her brother's humour, had noticed the displeasure which was apparent to none else ; rallied him upon it. "I tell you, Julia," he replied, "I do hate such praise ! a greater insult could not be offered me ; for, whenever I hear it said that *"such a young gentleman has a very pretty taste for poetry,"* I expect to find him an ass who has just ear enough to make smooth verses—and I am not ambitious to be ranked with such animals :—but," he added, his eyes sparkling and his whole form seeming to dilate itself—"if I could be named among——!" and he stopped, as afraid to betray the excess of his ambition. It is very evident how the sentence should have been completed.

Edward united in himself two qualities which are rarely found together in the same individual—a brilliant imagination and a sound judgment. His penetration into human character was wonderful ; and this, joined to wit, a keen sense of the ridiculous, and a deep vein of satiric humour, put a dangerous weapon into his hands ; but he

was too kind in heart to misuse it.* His taste was most exquisite. Nor was this perfection confined to subjects of literature (in which he was the ablest of critics); but displayed itself in even the most ordinary matters—his dress, the furniture of his rooms, the binding of his books,—the trimming of his pens; and the man, who could pronounce upon the merits of Milton, was often employed by his sisters to select the ribbon for a hat or decide upon the stamp of a calico.

I have now in my possession a poem of Edward's, which, to judge from the date of the manuscript, was completed during my stay with him. He never mentioned its existence to me; and once, when, in answer to some flattering observation of mine *that the day was not far distant when the fame he thirsted for should fill his cup to overflowing*, he exclaimed (with Castalio) that he would be honoured in his youth†, and I asked him "Why, then, do you not publish?", he evaded the question thus:—

"Publish!—Yes! and what publisher would undertake a work of mine?—But I will tell you what chance there is for the poetry of an obscure individual, who is too proud to sue for the patronage of some great man, and the liberty of disgracing himself by praising him for virtues which the great man has never heard of. I was lately in a bookstore, when a youth of genteel appearance entered, and begged leave to submit a poem of his to the exami-

* Can the reader conceive of the same individual's being a bitter satirist and a good-natured man? My friend Clayton was both. His satiric vein lay, I think, in a strong sense of the ridiculous, which was ever seeking food, even in spots the most barren, and a power of wit that wrought the subject into shape. I repeat it; if there ever was a bitter satirist, such was Clayton—if there ever lived a good-humoured being, such a being was my friend. The reader may, perhaps, find a better explanation for the anomaly than I have given. Let him settle the matter in his own way. Whatever may be the right explanation, however, the fact remains the same.—I do not make human nature, though the modern novelists are largely engaged in the manufacture.

† No! let me purchase in my youth renown,
To make me lov'd and valu'd when I'm old.
I would be busy in the world and learn—
Not, like a coarse and useless dunghill-weed,
Fix'd to one spot and rot just as I grow.

nation of the bookseller. The latter declined the work at once, without so much as looking at the title, and remarked to the disappointed author, "Now, sir, if you would write us a novel, indeed,—no matter whether good, bad, or indifferent—it might pass; for, I'll tell you what, sir,—we keep a magazine in pay on purpose. The editor has only to treat the public to a few cant phrases, such as *graphic delineation, deep and uncontrollable interest, pathos, &c. &c.* and then to display the due assumption by means of the pronoun *we*, and the work shall go down, sir. You see—here are some specimens:—"The novel before us is a truly great work."—"If the most brilliant wit, a narrative whose interest never flags, and some pictures of the most riveting interest can make a work popular, —So-and-so will be as first rate in celebrity as it is in excellence."—"We cannot but highly commend it." Ah, sir, that is beautiful! *We cannot but highly commend it*—There, there you have the due assumption! You can almost fancy you see the editor in his closet stretching out his right arm with the dignity of a member of Parliament, and bowing till his nose touches the green cloth of his table. *We cannot but highly commend it!*—or:—"These are two volumes of beautiful tales, written in language the most elegant, with narratives of extreme interest"—etc. etc.* Now, sir, you see the public can't resist this. Though there are few readers but are better judges than the reviewer, they always subscribe to his decisions—just as, when the leading goat takes it into his head to jump into a ditch, all the other goats are sure to scamper after into the same nastiness. It's all carried,

* It is a singular fact that these very passages are to be found in the best magazine of the day! Can it be that Plagiarism is abroad in this age of improvement? Does he lead the van in the march of mind?—We hope not. It is rather our opinion that great geniuses have all a certain resemblance to one another; and thus, as we suppose that Otway stole from Shakspeare, Molière, Terence, and so forth—and that a great modern author has stolen from Otway, besides sundry others,—when, in reality, it is merely a similitude of conception that produces the similitude of production, so a great editor of the year of our Lord one thousand-eight hundred-and twenty-eight may resemble a great editor of the year of our Lord one thousand-seven hundred-and eighty-eight.

sir, by direct impudence ; the editor never hesitates ; it is, *we think, we recommend, it is our opinion*, and so on, and so on. Write a novel, my dear sir ! We'll put you at the tip top of the list without reading it."—You see, Jeremy"—continued Clayton—"what success a poem of mine is likely to have, while novels are the only works that are read, and the taste of the day is governed by a hireling reviewer. Truly, Longinus, where he tells us *ἡ τῶν λόγων κρίσις πολλῆς ἐστὶ ΠΕΙΡΑΣ τελευταῖον ἐπιγένημα*, must have meant to write ΠΕΙΝΗΣ, since the want of bread is all that is requisite to make men critics !"

The person of this Edward Clayton, fair and dear Reader, was almost gigantic, yet finely proportioned :—the head like a Grecian deity's, with a high and polished forehead, eyes of the deepest blue, with long, dark, silken lashes, a nose straight, and haughty in its *setting* (if I may use the expression), a mouth whose smile had something of the fascination of Napoleon's, and whose scorn was almost withering, and a complexion so delicate that, but for his masculine frame and the haughty outline of his features, it would have given his appearance an air of effeminacy. His hair, of a chesnut-brown, curled loosely—or rather, *in waves*—and was always adjusted with peculiar elegance, yet so artfully, that its disposition seemed rather the result of accident, or carelessness, than of study.—In a word—he was one of the few handsome men that are good for any thing but the devil,

CHAPTER XXXII.

I, lictor, colliga manus — I, caput obnube — arbori infelici suspende —

LIVIA.

New fixed the halter —

PRISON.

I HAD been about a month under the care of Edward, and was so far recovered that I resolved to be no longer a burden on his hospitality, when one morning he entered my room with a face of more than usual seriousness.

"Jeremy," he said, "I have a particular favour to ask of you; and I hope you will not refuse it to me."

"And what is there that I can refuse to you, Edward?"

"The execution of a criminal is to take place to day, and I'd have you go with me to witness it."

"An execution, Edward?—I have a great aversion from such sights."

"And so have I; but I have a particular reason for wishing you to see this.—Besides, the air is remarkably fine this morning, and the ride will do you good."

It was Edward that made the request—so how could I refuse?

As we rode to the city, "What," I asked, "is the crime for which the poor wretch is to suffer?"

"Murder," answered Clayton,—"the murder of his own uncle—a man upwards of sixty years of age. The nephew, being well acquainted with the house of his relative, made an attempt to rob it by night, assisted by two other villains. In the midst of his operations he was surprised by his uncle and a servant. A shot from the

old man laid one of his associates dead at his feet, and the other, in endeavouring to leap out at the window, fell mortally wounded by the hands of the servant. The nephew, thereupon, attempted to escape by the door; but his uncle caught him by the coat. The ruffian struggled; he was powerful; but he could not free himself from his uncle's grasp. The danger was imminent;—he turned, and shot the old man through the brain.”

We took our station, a few rods from the place of execution, in a hovel belonging to a patient of Clayton's—the man, who was glad of the opportunity of obliging one to whom he stood indebted for many benefits, having reserved, at my friend's request, a room where we might witness the whole scene without being incommoded by the presence of others.

In about an hour, the immense crowd beneath the window where we stood began to be agitated; a murmuring arose like the fretting of the surge upon a distant beach, and the heads of the people tossed to and fro like the waves of a troubled ocean. The criminal was ascending the ladder to the scaffold. I could not see his face, for he held his head down; but I observed that his frame was broad and athletic, and his step firm. When upon the platform, he raised his head and stood erect. One look was sufficient for me:—I beheld the unfortunate Dick Hazard.

I was fascinated; I could not avert my eyes from the sight that burned them. I saw the poor wretch approach the edge of the platform, as if to address the multitude—then turn back with a sudden impulse, and whisper in the ear of the clergyman that stood nigh him—then nod impatiently to the executioner. I saw him, when all had left him but the hangman, and he stood upon the fatal drop, and the noose was fastened on his neck. I saw him too, when the cap was drawn down upon his eyes; but then I sickened, and, turning my back upon the

window, I pressed convulsively the hand of Clayton, and said, "Let us go."

Clayton led me to a corner of the room, and made me sit down. "We cannot go now," he said, in a voice which the awe of the moment sunk to a whisper; "If it was difficult to pass through the crowd when we came, it is now impossible even to penetrate it. Sit still, dear Jeremy, and compose yourself; we are here in private. I have arranged it thus, purposely; for, I anticipated such a shock, when I designed this — cruel lesson."

"Cruel indeed, Edward! — But I thank you for it."

Clayton did not reply. In a few minutes I asked him — but as though I were afraid to hear my own breath — "Is it all over?" He rose, and went to the window, and instantly returned.

"It is."

"May God have mercy on him!"

"Amen!" Edward solemnly responded.

On our return home, I remarked to my friend, in a kind of indirect question, "You were always acquainted with poor Dick's evil propensities, Edward?"

"Yes. When at school, he fell under my suspicions; and these suspicions were confirmed in the following manner: — His uncle (the same on whom the unhappy man was entirely dependent, and for whose murder he has just suffered the sentence of the law,) was noted for his charities. Shortly after the accident which befel you in the little river of our native village, he made inquiries respecting the family of the little boy who had behaved so well on that occasion, and, learning they were wretchedly poor, he sent for the boy to come to his house, and there delivered him a sealed packet to carry to his parents. Scarcely had the little fellow left the house, when Hazard, who had been present at the interview, set out in pursuit of him. On coming up with the child, he told him that his uncle had made a mistake in the article he had given¹ and wished to rectify it; and, bidding him wait

till he should return, he took the little bundle from the hands of the bearer, and, carrying it back to the house, opened it. It contained £50, in small notes. Of these Hazard took all but £5, then resealing the packet, restored it to the boy.—The discovery of this villainy produced the first rupture between Hazard and his uncle.—Shortly afterwards, when the latter refused to supply his nephew's exorbitant and somewhat insolent demands for money, the miserable young man withdrew himself from his protection."

"It strikes me, Edward, at this moment, that Hazard was the man that lately robbed and wounded me. Considering all the circumstances of the attack,—the personal make of the robber—the voice, which I recognized as having been once familiar to me, and which he tried to disguise—his evident unwillingness to wound me——"

"There can be little doubt of it. I thought so, when you first mentioned those particulars."

"Great God! what have I escaped!"—And I shuddered, as I thought what I might have been, had not my early quarrel with Hazard removed me from the reach of his corrupting influence.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Ἦτοι

Βροτῶν κέκριται,
 Πείρας οὐ τι θανάτου,
 Οὐδ', ἀσύχιμον Ἀμέραν
 Ὅποτε, παῖδ' Ἀλίου,
 Ἀτειρεῖ σὺν ἀγαθῷ
 Τελευτάσομεν.

PIND.—*Olymp.*

Unknown I die ; no tongue shall speak of me.
 Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
 May yet conjecture what I might have prov'd,
 And think life only wanting to my fame.

Douglas.

ON the evening of the day which forms the time of the preceding chapter, I was turning over one of the London journals, when my attention was painfully arrested by the following paragraphs :—

“Died, this morning, at his house in Bolton-street, Piccadilly, Jeremy Levis, Esq., a gentleman not less known for the amiable eccentricity of his manners, than the undeviating rectitude of his principles. The whole of his great wealth is said to be left to a nephew who bears his name.”

“Also, at the same place—and nearly at the same time,— Mary, wife of the above. The circumstances of this lady’s death are somewhat singular. A few hours previous to the dissolution of her husband, Mrs. Levis was going to his apartment, when a servant came running to inform her that his master was dying, and wished her to hasten to him, that he might see her before he de-

parted. In her confusion of mind at the suddenness of this afflicting intelligence, she cried out, "Tell him to wait till I come!" and instantly fell dead at the door, in a fit of apoplexy!"

I spoke honestly, when I said that these paragraphs (the latter of which now almost excites a smile by its curious detail) painfully arrested my attention; for the intelligence that I was reported to be my uncle's heir failed of immediate attraction, following as it did the news of that uncle's death. Nay, it augmented my grief—by showing how tenderly the old man must have loved me to forgive so entirely my shameless ingratitude.—— I handed Clayton the paper in silence, and left the room.

Presently after, a letter was handed to me. It was from a man, who, I afterwards learned, had acted as my uncle's lawyer, and had drawn up the will, and was pretty much to the same effect as the above obituary notices, stating also the day when the double funeral was to take place.

Now then Edward no longer opposed my intention of leaving him, and the next morning was fixed for my departure.

That morning came, charged with the death of a dearer than my aged uncle.——I bade adieu to the family, and set out with Edward for the metropolis. We rode in silence; for the events of the preceding day had tinged my thoughts with an unwonted melancholy, and Edward was too delicate, or too busy with his dreams of ambition, to notice my altered mood.——Suddenly he gave me the reins to hold, and leaned forward to adjust something in the harness. While he was in this dangerous position, the horse started;—Clayton was thrown headlong beneath the hoofs of the animal, and before I could stop the carriage, the wheel had passed over his head.

Scarcely knowing what I did, I sprang to the ground—I raised the mangled body: but the crushed brain had ceased to perform its functions;——Edward was no more.

* * * *

Thus died my first, my best friend ; and now that after so many years have elapsed I trace the scene, with a hand that trembles not from age, but grief——grief which memory still renews, though deprived of its sharpness, and mellowed to a feeling that even for one of my temperament, hath a tearful luxury far before the joys of mirthfulness,—— I think of the beautiful death-scene in Home's tragedy, where the affecting words of Douglas so nearly portray the feelings that might have burst from Clayton, had death allowed him time wherein to utter them.

Cut off from glory's course—which never mortal was so fond to run, his talents perished with him, and his virtues scarce served to gild his monument. A man of unblemished moral character, and, where well understood, of the most amiable manners, he was the pride of all those who claimed him for their friend, and the happiness and support of the little circle which he called his family.— Born a poet, he might have proved an ornament to the age in which he lived ; but it was destined otherwise,— and he died ignobly—cut off in the very budding of his hopes, and all uncared for, save by the few who had marked his sheltered beauty, and loved to watch it as it opened to the light.

" Green be the turf above thee,
" Friend of my better days !"







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